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Globalization, Migration, and Religious Change in a Oaxacan Indigenous Group

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To Na Ñuu Shaavi
The People of the Land of Rain

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Abbreviations

CDI	Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas; Indian agency that replaced the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI)
DIGEPO	Dirección General de Población de Oaxaca, Oaxacan population survey
IJA	Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, Mexican national census
MICOP	Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project, located in Oxnard, California; provides services to Mixtecs and other indigenous people in the area
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement among the United States, Canada, and Mexico; went into effect on January 1, 1994, and has had many negative impacts on Mixtec lives
UPBJ	Centro de Unidad Popular Benito Juarez, centered in Bakersfield, California; a cultural organization dedicated to education and the continuation of indigenous traditions

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First and foremost, I must thank the People of the Land of Rain, the Mixtecs, for their participation in this project. The members of the villages and the transnational communities with whom I worked had a very hard time figuring out what I was doing and I had a hard time figuring out what they were doing, but at the end I think we came to an understanding, or understandings, of each other. Among the many people who contributed to my work, Azucena Hernández Cruz, who worked as interpreter, was absolutely essential to the project. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas, who were a focus of my work over several years. In addition to the Mixtecs, Alberto Hernández—my friend, colleague, and collaborator for many years—deserves special thanks. He helped identify Mixtec non-Catholics in Tijuana, San Quintín, and northern San Diego County. He and I have had many discussions about migration and conversion and their relationships during the many years of our collaborations. His contribution has been invaluable.

I would also like to thank the organizations that supported my research over a period of ten years. These include the Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship Program as well as several different granting agencies within the University of California: UC MEXUS, the UCSB Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, and the UCSB Office of Research. The UCSB Institute for Social, Behavioral and Economic Research, whose directors have shown tremendous patience with me, must also receive a bow. The University of California, Santa Barbara, in general

has supported me over many years, for which I am much indebted. Finally, the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, in Oaxaca, allowed me to affiliate with them during my time in the Mixteca region. I am very grateful for their support.

Introduction

The indigenous Mixtec people of Oaxaca, Mexico, have developed complex, multi-sited transnational communities rooted in the ancestral villages of their homeland, the Mixteca region. The ways that these transnational communities are maintained are tightly connected to the tradition of *usos y costumbres*. This system is a hierarchy of alternating civil and religious *cargos*, or posts, which must be taken up by representatives of each of the families in the community. This includes people outside of the village in the far-ranging transnational communities. By continuing to recognize and participate in this system, Mixtecs help to create and maintain transnational networks. While there is a good deal of literature on transnationalism, the Mixtecs stand out in their allegiance to and participation in the civil-religious hierarchy that is generated by usos y costumbres. This requires that each member of the community participate in a series of Catholic rituals, focusing on saints, which make up half of the hierarchy. It is precisely by maintaining the hierarchy that they have maintained the communities (Besserer 2004).

Imagine my surprise, then, when I discovered in 2001 that there were four congregations of Mixtec Pentecostals in Santa Maria, California, an hour's drive from my home in Santa Barbara. When I found out that there were many Mixtecs who were converting to non-Catholic churches, my interest was piqued. Evangelicals absolutely reject the Catholic saints as false idols. In addition, they do not drink alcohol, an important ingredient in all Mixtec Catholic festivities. In fact, Pentecostals reject all of the religious side of the civil-religious hierarchy. It seemed apparent

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that, once Evangelicals returned to their villages, they were on a collision course with the Catholics, as well as with the major traditions that are the basis for Mixtec transnational communities.

My colleague Alberto Hernández at El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, in Tijuana, Mexico, knew many Mixtecs in Tijuana, and he began to research Mixtec Evangelicals there.[1] He found congregations in Tijuana, but many more in the Valley of San Quintín, about four hours south of the border in Baja California. I decided to go to San Quintín to conduct fieldwork there. What I found was that there were many, many Mixtecs living in the valley, and a good percentage were Evangelicals. This was turning into a long-term project.

My interest in Evangelicals in Latin America had begun during my dissertation research with indigenous Mayos in Sonora. There, I found two types of religious movements: Evangelical Protestantism and a millenarian, nativistic movement in which only Mayos participated (O'Connor 1979). My analysis of these divergent reactions to social change made me realize that cultural and social change is actually brought about by the decisions of many individuals. Of course, they must have reasons to change, and the social and cultural milieu must encourage and allow change. In Sonora, all of these conditions held.

With the publication of two books (Stoll 1990, Martin 1990) declaring that Protestantism was growing rapidly in Latin America, I turned again to my interest in religious change. I conducted a study of Evangelicals in Santa Barbara, where I met the Mixtec Evangelicals. Between 2001 and 2012, I conducted fieldwork in many locations where non-Catholic Mixtecs live, both in Mexico and the United States.[2] I eventually conducted research in most of the West Coast communities of Mixtecs in both countries.

In my research, I have always looked for explanations for behavior. I believe that such concerns as reflexivity (Marcus 1994:384–385) and the importance of recognizing the role of anthropology as part of the Western colonization of non-Western cultures are essential parts of fieldwork. I also agree with Geertz (1973:14) that anthropology is "a developing system of scientific analysis"; thus, my interest in the scientific explanation of behavior.

While the word *subject* is still used by academic review boards, the feeling I have toward the people I come to know well in the course of my work is that they are colleagues trying to explain to me, the dumb American, what for them are obvious realities. One of the most important of these realities at present is religious change. I claim only to have approximated an understanding of it.

A basic understanding of the history and the social organization of the Mixtecs is necessary before even beginning to document such change. Most people in Mexico have abandoned the practice of the ancient traditions of usos y costumbres. The

maintenance of these traditions is the basis of the transnational networks that make up every Mixtec community.[3] The role of the Catholic Church has been pivotal in this system. The presence of non-Catholics has had major effects on the system, but it has not destroyed it completely. The traditional system, the churches to which some Mixtecs convert, and the processes of conversion, are discussed in chapter 1.

But beyond merely documenting religious change, I wanted to find out *why* people change their religious beliefs. In the case of the Mixtecs, why are they changing when their very identity is supposedly wrapped up in Catholic rituals that are hundreds of years old? Why risk rejection and even expulsion from their villages? The fact is that the process of economic globalization has been affecting the Mixtec communities to an even greater extent than the religious conversion of their members. Conversion is actually part of a much larger process that includes economic marginalization, migration, a confrontation with modernity in its many manifestations, and the formation of transnational communities made up of complex networks that span the territory from the Mixteca to the many places where Mixtecs are found today. Modernity, globalization, and the ways that they impinge on Mixtec life, as well as Mixtec responses to these processes, are discussed in chapter 2.

My field project involved research in four different communities in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca.[4] While three of the four villages in the project are all rural, all poor, and all Mixtec, the ways that they have experienced emigration, return migration, and the religious conversion of their members have contributed to distinct outcomes in the relationships between Catholics and non-Catholics. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss these communities. The fourth community in my study is a neighborhood of the city of Huajuapan de León, in the Mixteca region. Here live members of a village who were expelled by their fellow villagers because they were non-Catholic. In the new community, everyone is non-Catholic. The ways that they have developed and adapted provide a contrast to the processes found in the other villages. This community is discussed in chapter 5. Chapter 6 is a summary and discussion of the similarities and differences among the four communities.

In addition to my fieldwork in Oaxaca, I conducted research in many of the places to which Mixtecs migrate, which are also the places where they tend to convert to Evangelical religions. These include communities in the states of Sinaloa, Sonora, and Baja California, in Mexico, and the states of California, Oregon, and Washington, in the United States. It is in communities such as these that the transnational networks mesh the members of Mixtec communities together even after many years of separation. While other migrant groups tend to acculturate and assimilate to US culture, the Mixtecs remain within their transnational communities, all tied to the Oaxacan villages where the members were born. Within the larger transnational communities, the converts to non-Catholic religions make up a

smaller web rather than a separate entity. They participate in the lives of the villages to the same extent that Catholics do, within the limits that their religious affiliations allow. Chapter 7 contains the results of this work.

In chapter 8, I summarize and draw some conclusions on the work presented in the earlier chapters.

In my research, I used the standard anthropological methods of participant observation and key informant interviews. I attended non-Catholic church services as well as Catholic fiestas. I conducted life history interviews with non-Catholic pastors as well as members of the Evangelical churches in each community. I interviewed the political leaders of the villages I worked in. I spent time in peoples' houses, just talking about general topics. I interviewed Catholic priests. In addition to this fieldwork, I have amplified my findings with statistics from the Mexican census, as well as with information from other studies.

What I found from my research among Mixtecs is that, indeed, the Catholics reject the non-Catholics, saying that by not honoring the saints they are destroying the community. The non-Catholics maintain that the rejection of the saints is necessary, whether or not it destroys the community. As the saints are from the devil, they must be eliminated. The non-Catholics reject *all* aspects of the religious organization of the community because it is Catholic, it includes drinking and dancing, and it is a waste of money. In some cases, the Catholics have expelled the non-Catholics from the villages and prevented them from returning. In others, there are now sizeable numbers of non-Catholics in the villages themselves.

While conducting field research in the four communities, I found that religious change varies from one to another. In one village, where the non-Catholics are approaching 50 percent of the population, a kind of agreement has been reached, where each group lets the other worship as they will. In another, there is a great deal of animosity between Catholics and non-Catholics, and there is no rapprochement. I believe this is because the percentage of non-Catholics, while growing, is still considerably lower than 50 percent. A third village has an even lower percentage of non-Catholics. Here there is an undercurrent of unhappiness, but, in general, the Catholics are in charge. The fourth community I studied is a neighborhood of the city to which a group of converts fled when they were expelled from their village. This community gives an idea of what life is like in a place where there are no Catholics at all.

In each of the communities I studied, migration is a major factor in religious conversion. It is migrants who first converted, and it is migrants who returned to the villages to try to convert their relatives and neighbors. It is in the migrant stream that a large percentage of Mixtec converts live today. They are part of the transnational communities that define their lives. Although they are steadfastly anchored to their

villages, non-Catholics are not willing to give up their religious commitments. To the contrary, they would like to see all the members of the villages become converts. At the same time, most remain outside the villages themselves. The risk of conflict over religion is at least part of the reason for this.

Globalization has led to migration away from the Mixteca region. Migration, in turn, provides the context for individuals to decide to convert. In the beginning, no one converted before leaving the Mixteca. Circumstances of migration led to their conversion in the migrant communities. Thus, globalization caused migration, and migration provided the contexts for conversion. The combination of these processes led to the formation of transnational communities composed of all the members of each village and smaller transnational networks of non-Catholics within the larger network.

Unlike some communities (see, e.g., Dow 2001), conversion in the Mixtec villages is not a way to eliminate the entire traditional social system. Although non-Catholics reject the Catholic aspects of this system, they still participate in the political aspects. Importantly, they still maintain their membership in the transnational communities that are the basis of Mixtec life today. There are hundreds of thousands of Mixtec migrants in Mexico and the United States. Each of them belongs to a transnational community whose focus is a village. This is a remarkable adaptation of traditional culture to the globalized world that Mixtecs inhabit. It has served them well, mainly because the migrants, for the most part, were born in the village. The extent to which the system will be maintained by the children of these migrants remains to be seen. However, the tenacity and the creativity of the parents may well continue, in some form, in the generations still to come.

NOTES

1. Alberto and I have collaborated on several projects over the years, he in Baja California and I in various sites. The results of our collaboration on Mixtecs can be found in Hernández and O'Connor 2013.

2. For my initial research on Mixtecs, I received grants from the UCSB Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, UC MEXUS, and the UCSB Office of Research. My subsequent funding came from the Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Program, which allowed me to spend a year in the Mixteca region conducting research in four different communities. Another grant, from the UC MEXUS program, funded multi-sited research with some parts of what might be called the Mixtec diaspora. Alberto Hernández collaborated with me on the second MEXUS grant.

3. There are also complex traditions of belief and practice that vary from one village to another. Some of these date to before the Conquest, and some intersect syncretically with

the folk-Catholic cargo systems (see Monaghan 1995:97–166). As the present multi-sited study focuses on transnational processes and religious change, the kind of full-bore, detailed research that we find in John Monaghan's work was not possible for each village. In any event, non-Catholics reject every belief that is not found in the Bible; these include precolonial traditions as well as those introduced by the Spanish.

4. During my stay in Oaxaca, I affiliated with the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social in Oaxaca City. I am very grateful for their support.

MIXTEC EVANGELICALS

I

Ñuu Shaavi, The Land of Rain

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MIXTECA REGION

It is said that Benito Juárez was once asked to describe the geography of the Mixteca region. He responded by crumpling up a piece of paper. That is what the area looks like. It is extremely irregular, with many small valleys between rippling steep mountains. The terrain is so difficult to tame that even today most of the roads are dirt and many communities are accessible only on foot. Both paved and dirt roads go around precipitous turns and hills, hugging the sides of the mountains. Landslides and mudslides are common occurrences. The extreme fragility of the soil in the region adds to the incidence of slides, and the torrential rains wash away soil from the cornfields as well as from the roads.

While these conditions present difficulties to the contemporary visitor, they have had important effects on the Mixtecs who live there. The villages are found in isolated nooks in the landscape and conditions are not conducive to intervillage cooperation. Geographic isolation is compounded by, or perhaps is a cause of, the practice of village endogamy: people usually marry people from the same community, thereby reducing the possibility of alliances among villages. This may be a continuation of pre-Hispanic social organization: according to Pérez Ortiz (2003:26), each community was actually a lineage and all the members were kin.

These factors, in turn, have had significant effects on culture: the Mixtecs have a long history of intervillage conflict (Terraciano 2001:227–28) and each village has its own version of the Mixteco language. Each village also has pre-Hispanic cultural

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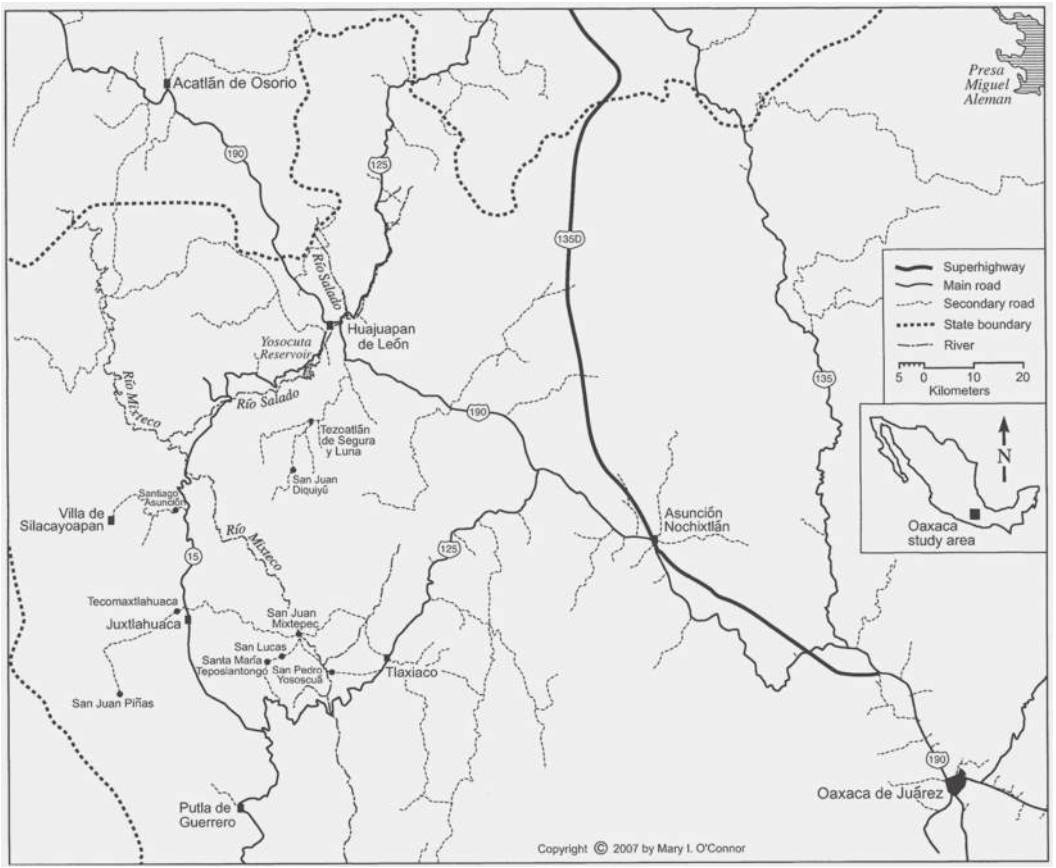

Figure 1.1. Map of Mixteca region. Map by Mary I. O'Connor.

and social traditions that help identify the residents of that village. These beliefs and practices include healing, birth, death, and agricultural complexes that are outside the scope of this work. All these aspects of Mixtec life have combined to create a situation where identity with the home village is all-important. Taken together, all of these conditions have influenced the way that present-day migrants, traveling from the villages to the rest of the continent, construct their identities. Even in Tennessee, Mixtecs from the same communities tend to find each other and congregate together.

THE SPANISH CONQUEST AND AFTERWARD

When the Spanish arrived in the Mixteca region in the 1520s, they described the region as densely populated, wealthy, and productive, with a complex social organization and a flourishing agricultural economy (Terraciano 2001:1–3, 198). No one would describe it that way today. The Mixtecs had developed a complex system of irrigating and terracing the steep mountainsides in order to expand the amount of arable land. The terraces, along with the native vegetation, protected the soil from being washed away in the rain.

The Spanish introduced cattle and horses. These animals trampled the terraces and ate all the plants and trees that had no thorns. Eventually, only plants with thorns remained and sheep and goats largely replaced cattle and horses. At the same time, large parts of the forests were cut down for fuel, leading to further degradation of the soil.

Although the Nahua word *Mixtec* means "land of clouds," the Mixtec name for their world is *Ñuu Shaavi*, "the land of rain." The combination of the abrupt landscape (much of it is vertical) and centuries of overgrazing has resulted in extreme soil erosion. Today, the Mixteca region is considered arid, despite the fact that the amount of rainfall[1] in other conditions provided more than enough water to support viable agriculture (Edinger 1985:16–49). There are parts of the contemporary Mixteca region that are blasted landscapes of eroded red dirt suitable only, in the words of one resident, for use as a setting for a Hollywood film set on Mars. There is no shortage of land; there is a shortage of land suitable for agriculture.

There are, it is true, small subsistence farms in the region. Most of them are planted to corn, beans, and squash—the traditional crops—although today it is cheaper to buy corn imported from the United States or Canada than to produce it. But people plant the same plot every year, using seeds saved from the year before and fertilizer from animal manure. If we discount the cost of labor (which is worth little or nothing here), a kind of subsistence can be wrenched from the soil. That is, if the rain comes at the right time and if floods do not destroy the fields. There are also goats and sheep as well as some horses, donkeys, and cattle. Still, the residents of

Figure 1.2. Eroded hills next to a cornfield.

the area are mostly very poor: Oaxaca, the state where most Mixtecs live, is among the poorest in Mexico, and the Mixteca region is one of the poorest in Oaxaca. It is not a tourist destination, generally speaking.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IN THE MIXTECA AREA

Most Mexican states are organized into two levels of political organization: *municipios* and *localidades*. The municipios correspond roughly with counties in the United States. Localidades are entities within the municipios and include everything from large cities to single dwellings. Mexico has historically been very centralized, and small villages in most states have one or two political posts. The municipio leadership appoints people to these posts; they are not elective.

Oaxaca differs from this pattern in several ways. First, there are thirty *distritos*, which comprise a level of bureaucracy between municipio and state. The distritos elect members of the national Senado and Cámara de Diputados, the Congress. Huajuapan de León and Juxtlahuaca are two Mixtec distritos from which large numbers of people emigrate (Mines, Nichols, and Runsten 2010:9). The communities discussed in this book are in these two distritos.

Municipios are within the distritos. They have several different committees, all elected, with the *presidente de municipio* at the top. These leaders are elected every

three years. Within the municipios are *agencias*. These are small, fairly autonomous villages. Within the Mixteca region, members of agencias decide whether the leaders are elected or named in the process known as *usos y costumbres*. The vast majority of Mixtec villages follow the tradition of usos y costumbres.

POLITICS IN MIXTEC VILLAGES: USOS Y COSTUMBRES

The state of Oaxaca recognizes and supports fifteen distinct indigenous groups whose members live in the state. The constitution recognizes that their communities were in existence before the state of Oaxaca and cedes autonomy to them as to their internal organization. This includes the political, economic, social, cultural, and jurisdictional scope of the laws. The constitution recognizes the power of the community authorities in accordance with the uses and customs (usos y costumbres) of the community (*Diario Oficial del Estado de Oaxaca* 1998:519–26). This echoes the changes in the national constitution, effective in 1992, that protects "specific forms of social organization" (Garma Navarro 2002:38). This, in turn, is a response to indigenous demands for recognition that have emerged in many Latin American nations since 1992.[2]

Unlike most other Mexican villages, the Mixtec agencias have a full court of community positions. In addition to the purely political posts, many posts appear to be entirely religious. All of these positions are filled each year during an assembly to which all the families in the agencia send a representative, and the assembly decides who will take on the duty of each post during the following year. In most cases, the decisions are made in a complex set of discussions about who will be selected for each post; these discussions take place over the course of several years prior to any assembly. So, at the annual assembly, most of the participants know who will be designated for each spot.

It is mostly in the agencias that the tradition of "usos y costumbres" persists. This system is also known as the civil-religious hierarchy (Monaghan 1995:78–93) as well as the fiesta or cargo system. It is found still in some of the areas of Latin America where there are indigenous populations, but most systems are changing or disappearing because of the penetration of the global marketplace. In the Mixteca region, the cargo system is a very important way of establishing and continuing the tightly knit social organization of the villages. Allegiance to the village, and membership in the village, are maintained even as more and more people leave for better opportunities (actually, the only opportunities) for work. Today, *las autoridades*—the authorities in the top echelons of the system—still control politics in the villages.

The civil-religious hierarchy consists of two sides, the civil and the religious.[3] Each side has many different committees, all of which must be filled every year.

Participants (and every family must contribute members to the system) alternate between the civil and religious sides. As community members ascend the hierarchy, the cargos become more complicated, difficult, and expensive, but participants also gain in village prestige and power. They become members of the various committees that are responsible for running the community. These include committees for protecting the natural resources of the village, as well as for providing candles and flowers for ceremonies in the church, dressing the saints in the church, hiring the band for the fiesta, overseeing the land and water rights of the villagers, and overseeing the schools. The highest committee on the civil side is the agencia committee, and the most important on the religious side is the *mayordomo*'s committee. The next *agente* and mayordomo are selected from these committees.

The agente is the recognized political representative who participates in the decision-making processes at the (higher) municipio level. He is also expected to be available to make decisions about the agencia, to settle disputes between villagers, and to cooperate with the religious authorities in preparing for the annual fiestas celebrating the feast days of particular saints. In the past, most agencias had several fiestas in addition to the one dedicated to the patron saint (usually, the saint for whom the village is named). While some agencias still have several fiestas every year, nowadays it is more common for there to be only one fiesta per year. This is a direct result of the integration of local communities into the market system.

The mayordomo organizes the religious side of the fiesta. Families within the mayordomo's social network, as well as participants in the lower echelons of the civil-religious hierarchy, are expected to contribute both food and work. The money for such elements of the fiesta as the fireworks, the bull riding, and other incidentals is also contributed by the mayordomo and his circle. Taken together, those in charge of the fiesta are responsible for a very large variety of different tasks, some of which must be shouldered by people on the lower rungs of the hierarchy. Although Catholic members of the village see all of these activities as part of the tradition of usos y costumbres, and the traditional activities which give meaning to their identity with the pueblo as a whole, the non-Catholics[4] generally see them as a waste of money. Increasingly, the Catholic migrants also see the fiesta system as too expensive. Rather than abolish the fiestas, they would like to see them simplified.

In order to maintain their rights as members of the village, families must contribute members who will occupy posts in the civil-religious hierarchy. This requires a full year of work without pay, contributions of money and/or services, and participation in the folk-Catholic belief system. In the context of massive emigration to the north, with the concomitant exposure to the modern world of capitalist consumption, it is remarkable that the fiesta system is still in existence in the Mixteca.

Indeed, the continuation of participation in the fiesta system by migrants has drawn the attention of anthropologists and sociologists (Rivera-Salgado 1999; Besserer 1999, 2004; Kearney 1995a, 1995b, 1996, 2000).

The ongoing allegiance to and identity with the home villages has led to the formation of transnational communities. The community becomes all the members of the village, no matter where they are. Kearney (1995b:237) describes these communities as existing in "hyperspace." According to Besserer (2004:112),

> In the great transnational topography of these communities, the diverse dimensions of community life (economic, educational, and cultural practices, births and deaths, etc.) take "place" up and down the whole transnational topography. That is, the transnational communities are multicentric, multidirectional, multidimensional, and express domains of gender. (author's translation)

Herein lies the difficulty facing Mixtec villages today. On the one hand, a large percentage of the members migrate to the north, but most of them still want to maintain ties to their pueblos. In so doing, they want to continue supporting the activities that are the basis of their identity with their villages: the cargo system. On the other hand, even many Catholics are less willing to contribute to the expenses associated with the religious aspects of the fiestas than they were when they lived in the village full time. The non-Catholics present a threat to the continuation of the traditional community, because they reject all of the fiesta activities. The Catholics say that if the non-Catholics, members of the village, with family in the village, refuse to participate in the traditions of the village, then the community ceases to exist. The non-Catholics say that it is good that the community as it was is no longer because it was based on beliefs in Catholic saints, which are the work of the devil. Despite such contentiousness, since 1992 Catholics and non-Catholics have learned for the most part to coexist. The community as it was no longer exists, but there is still a community. And it is a transnational community.

In addition to participating in usos y costumbres, villagers are required to send one member of the family for one day each week to provide *tequio*. This is a form of corvée labor that was at one time found in most traditional communities in Latin America. Like the civil-religious hierarchy, it has largely disappeared or turned into a system of cash payments rather than actual labor in most cases. This change has not happened in the Mixteca because there are enough unemployed family members to support tequio, even in villages that have experienced extensive emigration. Failure to provide tequio results in a fine, which can be seen as payment instead of work.

The numerous civil and religious posts, along with the requirement of tequio, produce a system in which almost every family of each village is involved in some kind of community activity. Everyone *really* knows everyone else, for they have all

cooperated on numerous village committees and frequently work on the same village projects. It is the quintessential face-to-face community.

For the visitor from the outside, the system seems very rigid and authoritarian. However, Monaghan (1995:78–93, 238–55) demonstrates that the sponsors of Mixtec fiestas are actually in rather egalitarian relationships with other villagers, relatives, and fictive kin, who make major contributions to the fiesta system even when they are not holding formal positions in the hierarchy. In addition, even in the most traditional villages not everyone goes to the top of the hierarchy, usually because they cannot afford the expenditures. Instead, they become members of committees that do not require a significant expenditure beyond a year's worth of work.

The culmination of village life is the *fiesta mayor* itself. This brings together all of the various elements of the village politico-religious organization, providing the actors with visibility, prestige, and, ideally, power. Villages vie for recognition of their fiestas. People come from all around the area to eat, drink alcohol, attend the dance, watch the bull riders and the procession, attend Mass in the church, and watch the fireworks.

Fiesta sponsorship incurs great expense but is considered to be a declaration of the prestige of the sponsors and a demonstration of village solidarity to the visitors who attend the fiesta. It is also, to some extent, a measure of the state of the fiesta system itself, as it has been affected by emigration from the villages. In agencias from which there has been a great deal of emigration, the fiestas were, for a while, much more elaborate than before people began leaving. Migrants would earn and save more money working outside the Mixteca than they had ever known before and would establish their status in the agencia by spending large amounts of money on the fiesta. However, as they have become more involved in the international market system, migrants expend less money on the fiestas. They support the idea of the fiesta, but in various ways would like to see its costs reduced. They would rather give service by being members of the civic committees.

Throughout Latin America, markets and money increasingly define the terms of trade and conspicuous consumption replaces conspicuous giving as the basis of prestige (Erasmus 1977). The fiesta system, based on conspicuous giving, loses adherents and eventually disappears or is changed into a system where every family contributes the same amount of money to the fiesta. One of the ways that village members opt out of fiesta sponsorship is by becoming non-Catholics (e.g., Dow 2001:76). In fact, Catholic Mixtecs often accuse the non-Catholics of converting specifically in order to avoid contributing to the community's cherished customs. Non-Catholics respond that they will take on more of the civil tasks, but in some villages they are not allowed to do this. One person said to me that in his village, you could not be an agente until you had been a mayordomo. In other words, you

could not become the political leader of the village until you had been a fiesta sponsor. Practically speaking, this prevents any non-Catholic from becoming a political leader in the agencia.

POLITICS AND RELIGION

Unlike many Latin American nations, Mexico has had freedom of religion since the middle of the nineteenth century. Subsequently, the constitution of 1917 was seriously antireligious and also anti-imperialist. The Catholic Church was divested of all properties, including church buildings and schools. Foreign clergy were not allowed into Mexico. This excluded the many Spanish Catholic priests in Mexico at the time but also the Protestant clergy, many of whom were from the United States (Bowen 1996:33–35).

These major political shifts did not seriously affect the Mixtec pueblos, however. To this day, they hold a significant amount of power against the incursions of political authorities at the state or even municipio level. The traditional village authorities would never allow any non-Catholics to enter the village to proselytize. The changes in religious allegiance in the villages would probably never have come about except as an importation by members who had left and returned. It was only when migrants began returning to their villages as converts to Evangelical churches, and challenged the entire system by refusing to participate in the fiestas, that the problem became local. The non-Catholics refused to help pay for those parts that seemed to them a waste of money, which basically included all aspects of the fiesta. These challenges have set off conflicts in most of the villages of the Mixteca, for even a few members of such tightly woven communities who reject the whole basis of society bring the threat of serious disharmony.

MIGRATION AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE

Although people had begun migrating from the Mixteca in the nineteenth century, the great majority remained home. About 7,000 participated in the Bracero Program between 1942 and 1964 (Espinosa Hernández 2003:26). Eventually, Mixtecs migrated to the northern Mexican states of Sinaloa, Sonora, and Baja California. It was not until the 1980s, however, that the largest waves of immigrants left their homeland. Between 1980 and 1988, nearly 100,000 individuals migrated from the Mixteca; this represented 30 percent of the population (Espinosa Hernández 2003:27).

The migrants to the north confronted a totally new way of growing crops as well as many challenges to their understanding of life. The fields of northwest Mexico

are flat and extend sometimes to the horizon. The crops are grown using chemical pesticides and herbicides, as well as chemical fertilizer. The farm laborers worked for wages that, although very small in comparison with the average worker in Mexico, were considerably more than most Mixtecs had ever known. The housing, in camps, was cramped and dirty, and people lived crowded together, in contrast with the typical Mixtec village, where the houses are separate from each other.

When Mixtecs went north, they encountered non-Catholic missionaries for the first time. The fact that there are other religions besides Catholicism was a revelation, as there were almost no non-Catholics in the Mixteca region before 1980. Although the missionaries were not allowed into fields or the camps, they presented programs, films, and other information just outside the boundaries of the camps. They handed out tracts and cassette tapes of sermons. They made a few converts. The number of converts increased with the increase in migration from the Mixteca.

In the late 1980s, the opportunities for migration expanded dramatically as the fields in the San Quintín Valley of Baja California Norte were brought under cultivation (Novo 2004:217). Although this area had been divided into *ejido* (land reform) communities during the 1950s, the lack of water in what is essentially a desert made for sparse farming and, consequently, a small population. In the 1980s, Mexican developers financed by US bankers sank wells in the valley floor in order to obtain the water necessary for irrigation and greenhouse agriculture. The developers of the San Quintín Valley sent buses to the Mixteca region of Oaxaca to recruit workers. The bus drivers gave very positive descriptions of the conditions in San Quintín in order to secure contracts with Mixtecs. The conditions were no different than those in Sinaloa, but there was more work: the valley of San Quintín is much larger than the fields of Sinaloa. The original residents of the valley were soon outnumbered. By 2001, according to Teresa Macías Herrera, the head of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista in San Quintín, 60 percent of the population of the San Quintín Valley consisted of indigenous people from Oaxaca (Macías Herrera, pers. comm.).

San Quintín offered an open field for missionaries: importantly, it is close to the United States. In Baja California, far more missionaries arrived than had gone to Sinaloa. The Mexican missionaries were supplemented enormously by US missionaries, who had a great deal more resources: money, Bibles, used clothes, films about the Bible, and cassettes of sermons and of stories from the Bible. All these materials were given to the people who attended the services, often held in tents in the open desert. The services tended to be popular, as they featured music, food, and other gifts, and as there were few other sources of entertainment in the valley. Large numbers of migrants converted to non-Catholic religions in San Quintín. Today, there are hundreds of non-Catholic churches in Baja California, largely made up of migrants from southern Mexico. Many of them are Mixtecs.

When the migrants returned to their villages, they had great tales to tell of their experiences; they also had cash, never in great quantities previously in the region, and consumer goods such as blenders and stereo systems. Eventually, going to the fields became an annual event participated in by people in most of the villages of the Mixteca. By the late 1980s, many Mixtecs began to go to the United States, mainly to California. Here, they made more money even than in the fields of northwest Mexico. Today, most Mixtec migrants go directly to the United States, although there are still substantial populations of Mixtecs who make the US-Mexico border areas their permanent homes. These communities are part of the transnational phenomenon that now extends to more than half of the United States.

At the same time, the 1980s was a period of tremendous economic change and disruption in Mexico. The international debt crisis, which is still being dealt with, began in 1982, when Mexico defaulted on its loans. Multilateral banks reacted by imposing crushing debt repayment plans based on economic restructuring. This led to the end of most government social support programs. The rate of migration began to increase dramatically. It was also during the 1980s that the number of non-Catholics in Latin America began to grow much more quickly than it had before (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990). Among Mixtecs, these processes are related: migration resulted in part from the curtailing of government support systems, combined with opportunities to work in the north. And it is migrants who first converted to non-Catholic religions.

THE CHURCHES

The Evangelical churches to which migrants have converted have similar, though by no means identical, organizational structures and belief systems. All of the churches stress the importance of the Bible as the guide for all aspects of life. For them, the Bible is the true word of God. Salvation is gained through committing one's life to God, daily reading of the Bible, and spreading the Good News, according to the Bible's injunction to go forth and teach all nations. In the ceremony of baptism by immersion, the individual is "born again," a new person who is committed to live according to the interpretation of the Bible espoused by a specific church doctrine. Although these interpretations may vary, there is enough overlap between most Evangelical denominations to allow for members to conduct services together, if a particular church is not available. Opposition to the Catholic Church is a major factor in uniting the various denominations.

With the exception of the Seventh-day Adventists, the churches in the communities where I worked are Pentecostals. This means that they interpret speaking in tongues and other trance experiences as baptism by the Holy Spirit. This

refers to the passage in Acts 2:2–4, where the Apostles congregated in Jerusalem for Pentecost. As they were sitting together, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and "tongues as of fire" appeared over their heads, and they began "speaking in other tongues." Members of Pentecostal churches believe that speaking in tongues (also called glossolalia) is a demonstration of being filled by the Holy Spirit, just as the Apostles had been on Pentecost Sunday; thus the name Pentecostal. When asked to describe the way they feel while speaking in tongues, converts often say that it cannot be described in words. Many Spanish-speaking Pentecostals describe their experience as *"gozo,"* or bliss.

Although being a Pentecostal means belief in baptism by the Holy Spirit, not every Pentecostal achieves this in his or her lifetime. Some denominations stress speaking in tongues as an important goal and specify how to attain this. Generally, fasting, praying, and reading the Bible, along with participating in emotional services where loud, rhythmic music is played, and moving in prescribed ways, are behaviors that are said to lead to trance. In some Pentecostal congregations, members speak in tongues at most services. However, in many, the experience is not common.

Usually, Evangelical churches are organized into groups based on sex and age, and each group is responsible for proselytizing as well as other activities. Each group makes a presentation to the congregation as a whole, usually once a week. Church organizations differ somewhat in the rigidity of their hierarchy. Some place an emphasis on top-down organization, while others are more egalitarian and open. Some have strict requirements about how members should dress, what activities they may participate in, and what they should not consume. A common theme to all these denominations is the rejection of the worship of idols and the consumption of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and tobacco. In order to maintain their abstinence, converts avoid occasions where such substances might be available. They also generally deplore events that have no clear economic significance or (non-Catholic) religious content.

THE CONVERSION PROCESS

Studies of conversion narratives recognize a three-part process in these stories: life before conversion, the conversion experience itself, and life afterward. In the case of converts to Evangelical Christianity, Peter G. Stromberg (1993:2–3) points out that these narratives are also structured in ways that "celebrate and reaffirm the dual effect of the conversion, the strengthening of their faith and the transformation of their lives." Thus, although they are stories of individual experiences, narrative structures are, to some extent at least, based on the cultural context of the conversion experience. In the case of Evangelical Protestantism, conversion narratives

are an important aspect of religious services as well as proselytizing activities. The convert realizes the importance of creating a narrative in order to participate fully in the life of the congregation.

In the process of creating a new personal narrative, the convert finds "meaning for inexplicable daily events as well as other more profound issues of the human predicament, including undeserved suffering [and] death" (Rambo 1999:267). During this process, the individual develops a new personality and goes through a spiritual transformation. The belief is that in baptism, the old person disappears and is replaced by a new, reborn person who is saved and will go to heaven. This is symbolized by the act of baptism itself: the old individual is submerged in water and the new individual emerges from the water. While narratives coincide with church teachings, the acts of creating the narrative and imbuing it with meaning are individual activities that simultaneously result in a personal transformation, a rejection of the Catholic religion, and the acceptance of a completely new set of rules to live by. The individual's belief in and experience of the divine are central to their participation in Evangelical churches. This participation cannot be explained purely in social terms (Rambo 1999:264). It is, however, the basis of the social activities of the believers.

A strong emphasis on evangelization in the non-Catholic denominations means that members are constantly accosting others with the message of the gospel. At work and after work, at children's schools, in the grocery store, non-Catholics are looking for people to convert. This, in itself, differs from the practices of Catholics and members of "historical Protestant" churches such as Presbyterians and Methodists. Most Catholics approached by *hermanos* (brothers) or *hermanas* (sisters)—or *evangélicos*, as they are called—reject the invitation to attend a service, or to have free pizza, or to go to a film about Jesus.[5] But some agree to go to some activity. Even most of these do not go further in the process of conversion, but some do.

In many cases, the individuals whose attention is captured by the Evangelical message have some problem, some difficulty in their lives. It could be an illness that seems incurable or that does not respond to the low-cost cures available to the average Mixtec migrant; in many cases, the sick person is a child. After the hermanos pray over the ill person or his/her child, the individual is miraculously cured. In other cases, especially in the migrant population, where alcoholism and drug abuse are common, the addiction is removed after the addict accepts Christ. The small congregation size and frequent services in these churches, along with abstention by all the church members, help reinforce the convert's will to abstain.

Still other cases feature an individual who arrives in an unknown place, where he/she knows very few people. Having lived until then in a village where everyone knows everyone, where ties of kinship and *compadrazgo* are crucial,[6] and where the

traditions continue back to ancient times, it is sometimes difficult to adjust to the life of a migrant. Some are robbed or beaten up. Some become homeless. People become disoriented, depressed, and can fall into despair. When such people are approached by someone with an invitation to a service, where they are welcomed personally to the group, where people pray for them and offer to help with their problems, the result is often that they accept some help. Even at this point, many Catholics do not continue on the path to conversion. Nevertheless, there are those who stay out of interest, or because they like the way the Evangelicals speak, or for other reasons. The intense, emotional characteristics of the services are important in this process; the emotional support from the congregations is also important. There are many instances of sudden conversions of large groups of people at very emotional services or at *confraternidades*, events that include numerous congregations and last several days. Even those who do not immediately accept Jesus as their personal savior are welcome as long as they attend services and participate in the prayers.

Some people who have been welcomed into the fold begin to attend services, and begin to obey the rules of the church; often they become aware that their lives are much more orderly than before. Having given up spending money on alcohol, dances, movies, and so on, they find they have more disposable income. They have more time to spend with their families. They have time and money to donate to the church and to participate in church activities such as sales of food to pay for evangelization projects. More often than not, they begin to believe that God is rewarding their faith and good works with material wealth, even if much of this is donated to the church. Members of these churches also tend to feel a sense of well-being, a peace, a certainty that what they are doing will take them to heaven, where they will receive a crown and where they will live forever with God.[7]

There is a distinct thread of millenarianism in the religious groups that Mixtecs join. The expectation that the Second Coming will soon usher in a time of peace and prosperity for those who follow the rules of the churches adds to the incentive to do so. The themes of living in heaven with God and of the imminence of Armageddon are repeated in the messages of the speakers at the services; they are also elements in many of the hymns that the participants sing.

HERMANA ADELA—MIGRANT AND CONVERT

For Mixtecs, the process of migration often runs parallel to that of conversion. Consider, for example, the story of Hermana Adela, who was born in the village of Guadalupe Morelos and is currently a member of the Centros Bíblicos in Huajuapan de León. When she was twelve years old, she and her mother and siblings began migrating to work in the fields of Culiacan, Sinaloa, and San Quintín,

Baja California. (Her father was dead.) Here, they began to see that there are more kinds of churches beyond the Catholic Church. Frequent activities of missionaries got the attention of the migrants. At that time (1976), Adela's family participated in the cargo system of the village. She was married at age fifteen, not an uncommon age for Mixteca brides even today. Her husband's family also participated in the civil-religious hierarchy of the village. When she was twenty-two or twenty-three years old (1985 or 1986), her husband's brother converted to an Evangelical church in San Quintín. He and three other members of the village were the first to convert. They began to talk to her family about "the things of God" (*las cosas de Dios*). Her husband refused to listen; soon afterward, he went to Culiacán by himself. Here we see the beginning of the interrelationship between migration and conversion as well as rejection of Evangelism by the residents of the village.

Adela had suffered from a problem with her eyes from the time she was twenty years old. They would itch, then swell up until they were closed. She went to several doctors about this, one of them a specialist, but they could not help her. She spent a lot of money, but got no results. Meanwhile, her brother-in-law continued to talk about the Bible and Jesus. She would not listen; she thought he was crazy. Then one day, she was alone and she found a copy of the New Testament. There, she read that Jesus Christ *heals people* (her emphasis). Later, she listened to a cassette that one of the converts had brought from Tecate, Baja California. The cassette also said that God cures people. She said to God, "If you exist, heal me." She said to herself, "If he heals me, I will serve him." Later, she listened to a tape specifically on healing, which told her to put her hand where the pain was. She said again to God, "If you exist, heal me, and I will serve you." Hermana Adela accepted Jesus that very night.

She was not actually cured that night, however. When I asked her if she was healed immediately, she admitted that the healing process took two years. Even so, she attributes her healthy eyes to a miracle by God. This is an example of how converts construct their conversion narratives to coincide with their newfound faith, eliminating certain facts that are bothersome.

Meanwhile, her husband returned from Culiacán. She tried to convince him to convert. He refused to convert and scolded her. She prayed for him but he got drunk. Things became difficult in their family. Eventually Adela and her husband, along with the brother-in-law who was among the first villagers to convert, went to San Quintín. By now there were many missionaries in the valley of San Quintín, and many congregations of Mixtec converts.

Here, the context changed. Instead of being in a remote village, surrounded by Catholics who thought they were crazy, they were confronted frequently by missionaries and Mixtec converts. This change is clearly important for the process of conversion. In San Quintín, there are religious *confraternidades*, meetings of large

numbers of believers. At these meetings, there are sermons, testimonials by individuals of their conversions, films, books for sale, and the opportunity to meet many converts over meals. Although Adela had begun to change in the village, she had to deal with her aggressive husband and other villagers who disagreed with her. Her husband refused absolutely to consider converting. In San Quintín, there was an Iglesia Pentecostés, a congregation with many Mixtec members. Adela asked the congregation to pray for her husband to convert. The following Sunday, there was an evangelization campaign. These campaigns feature films about the Bible and Jesus as well as individuals' testimonies of the miracles they have experienced. The missionaries hand out Bibles, tracts, and, in some cases, food and used clothes. They play loud, rhythmic music to the accompaniment of hymns. People are speaking in tongues. The emotional level of these services is very high, and while they are excited by the occasion, people are encouraged to go to the altar and accept Jesus. That same night, Adela's husband accepted Christ. It was not until 1991 that Adela was baptized, in an Iglesia Pentecostés in Tecate, Baja California. This case illustrates how, while there were very few converts made in the villages, people who had heard about the Bible and the word of God in their villages were more drawn to missionaries while they were in the migrant stream.

NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN THE MIXTECA REGION

There are several non-Catholic churches found in the region. The denominations include the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, La Luz del Mundo, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others. The congregations of most of these churches are primarily in the district towns in the region. In other words, Mixtecs as a rule do not belong to them. The churches in the following discussion are those that have congregations in the communities where I worked.

Centros Bíblicos

In 1977 an Evangelical missionary from Monterrey named Heriberto Ledesma Martínez arrived in the region. He set up reading and health classes and gave counseling and other kinds of social support to the poor of Huajuapan. A catastrophic earthquake in 1980 provided an opportunity to help people in grave need while simultaneously planting the seed of awareness of other religions besides Catholicism. As people sought help, they looked to the hermanos, or evangélicos. The Evangelicals brought in more hermanos from outside the Mixteca to help. Eventually, Heriberto Ledesma bought a property in downtown Huajuapan and opened it as the Centro Bíblico in 1987.

By this time, a number of Mixtec migrants, including Hermana Adela, had returned to their villages as converts to a variety of non-Catholic churches. When the converts arrived, they made known their new religious affiliations. Most tried to convert their fellow villagers, but in general their approaches were rebuffed. Most Mixtecs had not left the Mixteca region, did not know of other churches, and thought the converts had lost their minds. In the mid-1980s, the number of migrants returning to their villages began to grow, as a pattern of circular migration began to take shape. As more people left and returned, the knowledge that there are other religions began to be known in many villages, whose members had converted while in the migrant stream. Even so, there was conflict between Catholics and non-Catholics. Some converts were expelled forcibly from their villages. Others were afraid to return from the fields of the north. Eventually, circular migration resulted in the transnational communities that today characterize Mixtec society, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

Depending on where they had converted, the returned migrants belonged to a variety of different Evangelical denominations. When they returned to their villages, they found each other, but no one denomination was represented by more than one or two converts. There were quite a lot of differences as to the usage of jewelry, clothing, and other behaviors from one convert to the other, according to where and in what church they had been baptized. A custom developed in which converts who belonged to the same village participated in services regardless of the circumstances of their conversions. Eventually, these groups built churches and began proselytizing their fellow villagers.

The response to these activities by the Catholic villagers, migrants as well as stay-at-homes, was generally hostility. While villagers welcomed the money and consumer goods brought by returning migrants, they saw this new religious identity as something from the outside—a foreign import—which they did not want to accept. A major reason for the rejection of the new churches was the refusal of the converts to participate in the Catholic aspects of the fiestas. Religious conversion, which seemed like a personal choice in the context of migration, became a source of conflict in home villages.

With more and more migrants returning as converts, the situations in many of the villages became acrimonious. When the Evangelicals began to hold services, build churches, and proselytize, the problem escalated to the point of outright conflict. The converts did not want to reject every aspect of village life. Like the Catholics, they saw themselves as members of the villages. They wanted to live in the villages, maintaining their allegiance to and membership in the community. They also wanted the rights that come with village membership, which include the right to land and pasture for livestock, the right to build and occupy houses in the

village, and access to water and electricity and schooling for their children. All they wanted was not to participate in the fiestas. In other words, all they wanted was to reject the very basis of the community, according to the Catholics.

Eventually, the situations in some villages came to a head. The Catholics began by cutting off the water to the non-Catholics. Next, electricity was cut. When these measures did not bring the converts into line, they were incarcerated in the village jail. Eventually, they were physically driven from the community at gunpoint. Their Catholic relatives took over their lands, their animals, all their possessions. To ensure a complete break, they burned the houses of the non-Catholics.

While the expulsions were horrific for "los expulsados," they provided an opportunity for the Centro Bíblico in Huajuapan to extend its influence. Hermano Heriberto helped the expelled groups to find land on the outskirts of the city, and also helped them build houses. Eventually, three communities of expelled Evangelicals established themselves in religious communities in Huajuapan de León. Each of these communities consists of a church building surrounded by the houses of the church members. In this way, the original Centro Bíblico became Centros Bíblicos.

In 1992 Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari instituted a process whereby the national government came to recognize the existence of religious entities in the country. The federal constitution was changed as part of a modernization process that was aimed at renouncing the revolutionary radicalism of the 1917 constitution (Blancarte 1993:803). The changes allowed for the recognition of religious associations by the federal government. Although the main aim of the government was to recognize the Catholic Church, non-Catholic churches took advantage of the change to register themselves with the Ministry of the Interior (Blancarte 1993:784). The intent of the government was to create "a new legal framework for all churches founded on the principles of the separation of church and state, respect for religious freedom, and the maintenance of secular education in the public schools" (Blancarte 1993:786). The changes in the constitution allowed religious teaching in private schools and public worship outside church buildings; churches were also allowed to own property. At the same time, political activities and ownership of mass media by members of the clergy remain banned. It is also still illegal to hold political events in church buildings. Blancarte (1993:803) points out that

> The legislation which established equality under the law for "religious associations" through registration with the Interior Ministry granted a new social status for the minority religious groups. This . . . has allowed minority groups to emerge from their relative segregation and develop their activities more openly and more effectively.

One such organization was the Centros Bíblicos of Huajuapan. The church registered as an Asociación Religiosa in 1993. Centros Bíblicos also registered the

congregations of expelled villagers with the government, thus giving them a legal status. In some cases, the non-Catholics who have formed congregations in other villages, without being expelled, have also registered through Centros Bíblicos. Centros Bíblicos is a very inclusive organization that welcomes members from any denomination that is Pentecostal.

Trinitarians and the Oneness Doctrine

During the early days of the Pentecostal movement, one of the many diverging groups established the doctrine of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ rather than in the name of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The reason for this distinction is that, according to the Acts of the Apostles, when the Apostles began baptizing people, they did so in the name of Jesus Christ. The doctrine is explained as "Dios es Uno," God is One, and has come to be called the oneness doctrine, or the Jesus' name movement (Gill 1994:13–42). This doctrine divides a small number of denominations from the rest of the Pentecostals, who continue to baptize in the name of the Trinity. Hence the name Trinitarians. In the Bible, Jesus was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although the Centros Bíblicos baptize in the name of the Trinity, people who were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ are welcomed into the group. This inclusiveness of the Centros Bíblicos is a characteristic that suits the religious landscape of the Mixteca region. In the communities where I worked, some of the non-Catholic churches were part of the Centros Bíblicos. Other churches included the Iglesia de Jesucristo de Las Américas, an assortment of Trinitarian religious groups, and the Seventh-day Adventists.

The Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas

The Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas was established in 1971 by Efraím Valverde, previously a bishop of the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus (Valverde 2002:196). Pastor Valverde had been an important bishop in the Apostolic Assembly but had serious disagreements with other members of the church. He officially registered the new church in Sacramento, California. The most important characteristic of this church—and the source of the conflict between Hermano Valverde and the Apostolic Assembly—is its almost complete lack of structure. The Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas is the least structured church organization I have ever encountered. There are no bishops, no board of directors, no organizations of members into different societies—indeed, no pastors, in the common sense of the word. A new congregation is typically formed by members of an existing congregation. The new congregation acquires a pastor by a process of emergence: the person best qualified, in spiritual

terms, to lead the group becomes the pastor. In order to deal with secular authorities, secular entities are established. These secular entities have no actual power within the church itself; they only represent it to the formal, political world.

Carlos and Herminio Cruz and Lorenzo Mendoza Cervantes founded what might be called the Mixtec wing of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas (IJA) in 1978, seven years after the IJA was establshed by Hermano Valverde. All three were baptized in Vista, California, in an Iglesia de Jesucristo church. They immediately returned to the Mixteca region, to their respective villages. They were greeted with rejection and threatened with expulsion. They moved to the city of Juxtlahuaca, where they built a community of church members with a church in the center. As converts in other villages in the same distrito were expelled, they joined the Juxtlahuaca congregation.

The IJA is less inclusive than the Centros Bíblicos in that in order to belong, members must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. The IJA has rules beyond the minimal for Pentecostals. Women members do not wear trousers; they wear long skirts and do not cut their hair. The members wear no jewelry, not even wedding rings. The members of this church have established numerous congregations in the Mixteca region and are now in the process of establishing congregations in every community to which Mixtecs migrate. While the Centros Bíblicos operate only in the Mixteca region, primarily in the distrito of Huajuapan de León, the IJA is a transnational organization. The largest congregation in Mexico is in Juxtlahuaca, but many villages have their own congregations. Two of the villages where I worked in the Mixteca have congregations, and there are congregations in the Sinaloa and Sonora communities where Mixtecs live. There are also substantial congregations in all the communities in the valley of San Quintín, Baja California. The largest number of members in the United States is in Santa Maria, California, but there are also congregations in many of the migrant destinations in the US. The church leaders say there are 10,000 to 15,000 Mixtec members; some are in Mexico and others are in the United States.

The Seventh-Day Adventists

Whatever their differences, the churches in the previous discussion are all Pentecostal, and were founded by Mexicans. The pastors are free to choose any topic for preaching on any day. Often, there are two or more speakers at each service, and they too speak on topics of their own choice. The Seventh-day Adventists, however, all study and preach on the same topic on any given day. These topics are selected by the church leadership in the US. The Adventists recognize the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the process of conversion and in the gift of prophesy, but they do not

recognize speaking in tongues as baptism of the Holy Spirit. Beyond abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, the Adventists abstain from pork and shellfish as well as all the animals prohibited in the biblical book of Leviticus 11.

While the other non-Catholic churches in the villages where I worked were founded in 1975 or later, the Adventist church was founded in the middle of the nineteenth century, in Battle Creek, Michigan. It has congregations throughout the world. Its organization is hierarchical, beginning with the world headquarters in the United States and ending with the *mayordomos encargados* at the level of the community.

In the Mixteca region, there are three congregations of Adventists. The largest is in the village of San Miguel Monteverde. Here, there are over 200 members. Santiago Asunción is the second largest, and San Juan Diquiyú is the smallest, consisting of an extended family. This congregation is discussed in chapter 4.

THE RESPONSE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO RELIGIOUS CHANGE

One reason for the success of the non-Catholics is the shortage of Catholic priests. Latin America has a much larger Catholic-to-priest ratio than anywhere else in the world (Hoge 2005:3); until recently, this situation has been accepted as a given. Most Latin American Catholics "have evolved a family-based or home-based Catholicism . . . taught by mothers and grandmothers in the home" (Hoge 2005:7). In other words, most Latin Americans are folk-Catholics who do not expect to participate as fully in the Catholic liturgy as do people in the United States. Thus, there has not been a perception of a lack of priests.

Until the influx of non-Catholics, this was true of the Mixteca region. However, now the Catholics point to the absence of priests as a cause for the increasing popularity of the non-Catholic religions. In Mixtec villages, the non-Catholics have several services every week, but the Catholic priests generally only visit during the fiestas. Because there is no one to say Mass on Sunday, the number of weekly Catholic ceremonies in the agencias is low. The majority of Catholic clergy live in the larger villages and towns of the region and they minister mainly to non-Indians.

One issue that I noticed in my fieldwork is the difference between the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church and the more egalitarian organization of the non-Catholic denominations. While the Catholic priests live in the larger towns, the non-Catholic pastors live in the agencias, where they are literally part of the community. The Catholic priests call members of their flocks "*hijo* (son)" and "*hija* (daughter)," while all members of the non-Catholic congregations (including the pastors) call each other "hermano (brother)" and "hermana (sister)." The combination of a lack of priestly presence and the more egalitarian relationships of non-Catholics was cited to me by Catholic villagers as one cause of the increase in non-Catholics.

In general, the Catholic Church has instituted practices to deal with the increase in non-Catholics. Given the lack of clergy, there is much greater participation of the laity in Catholic Church activities than previously. In some parts of Latin America, there has been a new vitality in the participation of lay people in church activities. This has been, in part, a response to the challenge of non-Catholic proselytism. This is true to some extent in the Mixteca region also.

According to one of the two priests in charge of the municipio of San Juan Mixtepec, there are now two priests instead of one to minister to the thirty-six communities. He also notes that there are more lay pastoral agents than before the non-Catholics began returning to the villages. However, he did not say that the reason people are converting is the shortage of priests. His explanations for the conversions include the weakness of the faith of the Mixtepecos, the language problem (he does not speak Mixteco), the continuity of folk beliefs, the fact that the Catholics do not understand the Gospel, and the fact that non-Catholics evangelize strongly, and they don't respect the priests. According to him, the reason for conversions has nothing to do with the lack of priests or their attitude toward their congregants. This view helps to perpetuate that attitude.

One goal of the Mixtepec priest is to convince the people that San Juan Bautista (the patron saint of Mixtepec) is not the most spiritual entity: Jesus is more important. In other words, he would like the Catholics to give less emphasis to the fiestas, which are folk-Catholic events, and become more orthodox. One way of fostering this is that there are now many more catechism classes required in preparation for first communion, confirmation, and marriage. During these classes, the priests discuss Protestantism as a historical process of protest against the Catholic Church. For a young person to receive first communion or be confirmed, he or she must attend these weekly classes. Couples who want to be married in the church must have received first communion and been confirmed. In this way, the clergy is forcing orthodoxy on a folk culture. The increase in the number of non-Catholics in spite of these policy changes indicates that perhaps the clergy are unaware of the reasons for this conversion, as explained by Catholics in the villages.

CONCLUSION

Mixtecs are involved in a remarkable process of reinventing themselves. An important part of this process, and an important cause of it, is a proliferation of choices available to individuals. While the traditional patterns of social organization at the village level continue to be found, there are now alternate patterns that are developing in the villages. These new behaviors are direct outcomes of migration. One

choice being made is to convert to non-Catholic religions. The decision to convert is made by individuals, but it has impacts on families and entire communities in the homeland. This chapter has described some of the processes involved in this choice.

Migration itself is the aspect of globalization that has impacted Mixtecs the most. The bewildering array of possible activities confronted by the Mixtec migrants are also a factor of globalization. Although globalization presumes that all participants are modern, there are many parts of the lives of Mixtecs which are decidedly not. Are they inexorably moving toward modernity, or are there choices they can make to preserve their culture and selectively choose the elements of modernity that they like? Is there more than one kind of modernity? These questions are considered in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. The Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), the Mexican census, in 2000 characterized the Mixteca region as receiving among the highest rainfall totals in Mexico.

2. For a discussion of this matter, see Eisenstadt 2007.

3. Cancian (1965) contains the classic descriptions of the Mesoamerican fiesta system. For the fiesta system in the Mixteca, see Monaghan 1995.

4. All of the churches I studied in this project are Evangelical. Most do not recognize or accept the term *Protestant* for their groups. Given the increasing religious diversity in Latin America, the term *non-Catholic* is the broadest and hence the most inclusive.

5. Many Catholics believe that the reason people convert to other religions is that the evangélicos pay them or give them food so that they will convert. In reality, the original offers of food that sometimes accompany proselytizing are usually one time only. As people participate more in the life of the congregation, they are expected to contribute money, food, and/or labor to the group. Those who have no interest other than in what they can get out of the church are quickly disappointed.

6. Compadrazgo is the relationship between a person's parents and godparents. This is very close to a kinship tie; it is sometimes called fictive kinship. Compadrazgo ties tend to expand an individual's social networks and the number of people one can depend on for help.

7. It could be said that Catholics might also derive a sense of well-being from participating in Catholic rituals. However, folk-Catholic rituals do not have the same emphasis on heaven or on the second coming of Jesus. Rather, they are a means of expressing and continuing social relations in the village. These, in and of themselves, may lead to a feeling of well-being but evidently not for those who eventually convert to Evangelical religions.

2

Mixtecs and Modernity

MODERNITY, INDIGENEITY, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Are indigenous people modern? Can they be modern? Is modernity the absolute opposite of tradition, which indigenous people such as the Mixtecs honor as their tie to their villages? These are questions that social scientists ask (Ariel de Vidas 2006; Sahlins 1999; Singh 2011; Pitarch and Orobitg 2012). Most Mixtecs do not recognize the term "*modernity*" as having anything to do with them. Yet they are surrounded by the products and symbols of modernity. Indeed, even in many villages, symbols of modernity such as cellular phones and video cameras are common. By embracing these, do Mixtecs become "less indigenous"? By converting to other religions, do Mixtecs become more modern, less indigenous?

MODERNITY AND RELIGION

Modernity is a European construct that has not appeared independently anywhere outside of Europe. Yet seemingly all nations must aspire to achieve it (Wagner 2012:1). There can be little doubt that modernity was made possible by Europe's colonization of the rest of the world, beginning in the fifteenth century. The unequal relationships established by colonialism did not end with the political independence of the colonies but continue today. If modernity was achieved through colonialism, then it is unlikely that nations such as Mexico, which do not have colonies, will be able to achieve it. But the idea persists that the goal of all nations must

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be modernity, that if all nations were modern the world would be a better place (Gwynne et al. 2003:195; Escobar 2007:181).

Modernity is associated with progress—the idea that human life is becoming better and will continue to do so. This improvement is achieved through science, which is based on rationality. Individual freedom of choice replaces the tyranny of the family and community. Democracy is the political embodiment of this freedom. The market is the economic one. Modernity facilitates the expansion of the state by replacing relationships based on trust with a faith in the institutionalized rules of impersonal bureaucracies, which presumably treat everyone the same. These are some of the central elements of modernity; they by no means comprise the entire laundry list of possible characteristics.[1]

Although freedom of religion may seem a logical part of modernity, the role of religion in society was severely contested for over a century after other aspects of modernity were accepted in Europe. Conflicts between Catholics and a growing number of warring Protestant movements were the defining feature of the history of Europe between 1559 and 1648 (Dunn 1979:1–3). In these stand-offs, the Protestants, especially Calvinists, were the standard-bearers of modernity, while the Catholics represented the rejection of modernity along with the entire Protestant Reformation. There was no desire, on the part of the Protestants or the Catholics, to compromise: "Everyone agreed that religious toleration was intolerable" (Dunn 1979:8).

In fact, true religious toleration was not really established in a civil state until the US Constitution was adopted in 1789. In Mexico, the Constitution of 1857, guaranteeing religious freedom, as well as decreeing the establishment of other modern institutions, resulted in a civil war between the Liberals, representing modernity, and the Conservatives, representing tradition, especially allegiance to the Catholic Church. The Liberals won that war, but contention over religion did not disappear. The histories of both the United States and Mexico show that the establishment of a law does not necessarily guarantee its peaceful acceptance by the population at large. Toleration is still somewhat intolerable.

The conflicts among present-day Mixtecs echo the wars of the past: the non-Catholics are seen as foreign and anti-tradition, while the Catholics are associated with traditions previously considered immutable (Knight 2007:97–98; Blancarte 2000:592). From another point of view, Catholics are perceived as a drag on progress and non-Catholics are the key to modernization.

"THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION"

Modernity is the driving paradigm of the industrialized nations, which insist on making sure that their less-developed brethren have the benefit of this Western

invention. It has been the underlying justification of colonialism and its latter-day counterparts, development and neoliberalism. Today, there seem to be no aspects of modernity that can be criticized. It celebrates rationality, individual freedom, democracy, and the free market. The actual effects of these ideals on those who originally came under their power in the eighteenth century, however, have given us a world very different from that envisioned by the worthy philosophers.

Rather than a rational world of democracy and individual freedom, capitalism and progress created what Bruce Berman (2006:3) describes as a system that has "generated intense moral and political crises in every society, and led to the most destructive violence against humanity and nature in history." This was as true for the initial victims of industrialization as it is for today's Third World victims of globalization.

In *The Great Transformation*, Karl Polanyi (2001:33–218) points out that the Industrial Revolution in England, between the 1780s and 1830s, destroyed the social compacts that had held society together for millennia. In the premodern world, although the market existed, it was contained within a larger social context where reciprocity and redistribution were the main forms of exchange. Land was held communally and allocated according to the needs of the members of the community. Labor was part of the duties of individuals to the family or the community. Peasants worked their land and paid their rents from the sale of their products. Selling land or labor were concepts that did not exist. The kinship systems that regulated this world depended importantly on relationships of trust, on the assurance that people would behave according to the rules of the society rather than their individual choosing. Predictability was at the bottom of the whole.

With the imposition of the market economy, the "great transformation," everything changed. Now, everything was commoditized, part of the market. Everything had a price and everything was allocated by supply and demand in the marketplace. The traditional social relations were swept away in the face of raw capitalism. Polanyi (2001:136–38) documents the terrible disruptions of these changes to society in England, when capitalism was in its infancy. The glories of the free market were not so evident to the paupers who appeared in the towns as a result of the rational choices of landowners and the rulers of the day (91–95). In Polanyi's view (and Berman's and not a few others), modernity was the result of a terribly destructive force that affected most people negatively and only a few people very positively.

Modernity, colonialism, and the capitalist world-system that developed in the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, have brought us now to globalization. Globalization, new and fresh as it may seem, is really only the most recent version of the drive to impose the market economy on all the nations of the world and in every corner of those nations. The capitalist mantra of "buying cheap in order to sell dear" clearly results in those who are selling cheap getting the less pleasant side

of the bargain. The Mixtecs, who have only their labor to sell on the global market, find that it is very cheap indeed.

GLOBALIZATION AND NEOLIBERALISM

In the world of the Mixtecs, the most visible consequences of globalization are neoliberalism and its effects. *Neoliberalism* is the term for a group of policies devised by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the wake of the global debt crisis which began in 1982. As most of the Third World was unable to repay its debt, the banks had the power to demand changes in policy which, economists predicted, would create economic growth so that the loans could be repaid. The debt crisis was said to be caused by too much government control of the market, as well as by strict controls of foreign investment and trade, on the part of the debtor nations. As part of the restructuring of the economy required by the World Bank and the IMF, debtor nations were to open their markets to the world economy and to allow foreign direct investment. The role of government in the market was to be severely reduced by privatizing government-owned enterprises. Money from the sale of these companies could be used to repay loans. The market was to be the primary factor in the allocation of resources. The private sector was to be the main instrument of economic growth through deregulation, secure property rights, and financial liberalization. This remedy was, essentially, the re-creation of the conditions of classic liberalism, in turn based on the ideas that had given the world the first Great Transformation, not to mention the Great Depression. Despite the negative outcomes of these policies, as demonstrated by the global economic crisis of 2007–2008, neoliberalism is alive and well today.

In Mexico, the primary face of neoliberalism has been the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. This agreement went into effect on January 1, 1994. Globalization had already made inroads in Mexico to some degree by then. For example, multinational corporations such as Birds Eye vegetables had invested in trade agreements with Mexican vegetable farmers as part of a vertical integration process. Domino's Pizza, Blockbuster Video, and other retail stores familiar to people in the United States had become common in the larger cities. When I returned to Mexico in 1993, after some time away, I was very surprised to see US brands where only Mexican ones had been in place during my entire previous experience in Mexico. While these changes had begun when Mexico joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1986 (Robertson 2007:1378), and thus had affected Mexicans before 1994, the full brunt of NAFTA was not felt until after it was implemented. Over time, as various agreements have gone into effect, Mexico has had ever less control over its economy.

MIXTECS IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Mixtecs had by the 1990s already begun to be affected by globalization, though few were aware of the reasons for their experiences. In agriculture, the trade agreement was anything but free or equal among the three nations. The United States, in order to protect its agricultural sector, pays enormous subsidies to the wealthiest of agricultural producers. These subsidies continue, while in Mexico the subsidies for corn production are pitifully small:

> In Mexico, each acre of planted corn yields one ton, versus more than three and a half tons in the United States; Mexico subsidizes its agricultural industry with $3.5 billion each year, versus $20 billion in the United States; Mexico's fertilizers, electricity, diesel, and gasoline cost up to 60 percent more than in the United States, and the Mexican government promotes dumping against its own producers, having charged no duties on corn imports that exceeded quotas since NAFTA was instituted—duties that would have equaled $1.3 billion between 1995 and 2000. (Zermeño 2008:28)

These terms of trade resulted in a deluge of cheap corn, beans, and other foods traditionally produced in the Mixteca; the Mixtecs understood the underlying causes poorly, but the effects were very comprehensible: they could not sell their corn because US corn was cheaper. Along with this crisis, government programs such as CONASUPO, which guaranteed low prices of basic foods for sale to the poor, were dismantled in the name of "fair competition" with programs not subsidized by the government (Zermeño 2008:29). In general, Mixtec corn production had to compete with that of the United States; this was and is always going to be a losing proposition for the Mixtecs.

The consequences of these and many other policies implemented by multilateral banks have been largely negative for the poor of Mexico, of whom Mixtecs are among the poorest. There is little wonder, then, that in the 1980s, when agribusinesses in northern Mexico began sending buses to the villages of the Mixteca to hire workers (Zabin et al. 1993:48), many Mixtecs willingly acquiesced. Whether the conditions and payment were actually as advertised mattered little, as the alternative was hunger and extreme poverty—these, certainly, were very well known. What confronted them in northern Mexico and the United States was modernity.

Modernity, in the guise of modernization, has had predominantly negative effects on Mixtec society in general. However, Mixtecs have responded to modernity by adopting and rejecting aspects as they see fit. As Sahlins (1999:v) points out, "Cultural differences thrown out the front door by the homogenizing forces of world capitalism creep in the back in the form of an indigenous counterculture, subversion of the dominant discourse, or some such politics (or poetics) of indigenous defiance."

Consider, for example, the cellular phone. The Mixteca has never had many land telephone lines. Before the advent of cellular technology, typically a village had one telephone, not often used. When someone in the village got a call, that person was paged or searched out. Telegrams also had a place in the system. Telegrams were much more reliable than the telephone, albeit quite a bit slower. Beginning in the 1980s, cell phones have been available to most Mixtecs in Mexico and in the United States. Cell phones are necessary to the smooth running of the transnational communities. Thus, communication is exponentially more available as a consequence of globalization. The Internet can be accessed from many villages, some of which have Web pages that create a virtual transnational community that coincides with the one on the ground. Schoolchildren instantly learn how to use computers when one becomes available. Lower costs of transportation have a variety of effects. They make migration to the north cheaper, and thus migrant labor more available to employers. At the same time, cheaper transportation facilitates migrants' bringing many examples of the modern world into the villages. In this context, the highly decorated bed of a large, new pickup truck from the United States being used to transport the bride and groom through a village in a traditional Mixtec wedding is not incongruous to the people themselves, regardless of how it seems to outsider anthropologists. Likewise, the video recording of the traditional fiestas is now commonplace. Thus, modernity has not resulted in the end of tradition but rather an elaboration of it. Here is an example of how Mixtecs redefine and repurpose elements of the modern world to suit their indigenous world rather than abandon it.

GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION, AND MODERNITY

Globalization has caused migration to the core nations, where the markets attract cheap labor. Without NAFTA and similar agreements based on the decisions of multilateral development banks, the Mixtecs would probably not have left their homeland in the numbers we see today. Migration involves encountering modernity, especially in the United States. Modern goods and services such as cell phones, televisions, and computers are available to many Mixtecs, even in Oaxaca. But is a boy who uses a cell phone while herding sheep truly modern? Classic modernity would have to include a market for the wool and transportation to get the wool to market. The wool would have to be turned into products for sale to modern consumers. The boy's family would have to know how to conduct such a business. Actually, there is a market for wool in the valley of Oaxaca, where weavers famously make rugs for international buyers. But Mixtecs do not know how to shear sheep, and they have no communication with the weavers. Many Mixtecs know the supermarkets of Oxnard, California, better than the wool markets in the valley of Oaxaca. Sheep

are tended until needed for food, then slaughtered for meat. Rather than becoming modern in the classical sense, Mixtecs have adopted cell phones as part of their response to the situations they find themselves in as a result of globalization. The core aspects of Mixtec culture are not significantly changed by the use of cell phones.

In a way, the phones are a means to continue traditional culture while simultaneously producing the new social system of transnational communities. These communities have the dual role of providing elements of modernity to the villages in the Mixteca and continuing the traditional cultural practices of usos y costumbres. These traditions have been affected by globalization, but they have not been eradicated. So perhaps, as Singh (2011:58) suggests, "[T]he idioms of indigenous modernity underscore that modernity is better understood as a field of tensions that points to multiple paths through modernity rather than as a unilinear narrative of modernization processes and systems."

Migration ties Mixtecs to the modern world, but only very tenuously and at the very bottom of the economic system. Because they have no way to change their economic status, they are able to see and appreciate the products of modernity without actually participating in the modern world to any great extent. Migrants take consumer goods with them when they return to their villages as trophies of their very marginal economic success as farmworkers. Migrants send money to their families, most of whom use it to buy food and clothing. Some use the remittances they receive to send their children past ninth grade, the highest grade offered by the Mexican government. To the extent that the children then participate in the modern world, migration contributes indirectly to an aspect of modernity. Money sent to the villages by groups of migrants for the betterment of the entire community is sometimes used to extend modern services such as potable water or sewage removal. But often the money is used to fix up the Catholic church or build new government buildings that have the trappings of modernity but are still symbolic of the traditions of usos y costumbres—decidedly not modern. Mixtecs, as individuals and as members of transnational communities, pick and choose the elements of modernity that they are willing to accept. They then weave these elements into their existing cultural beliefs and practices.

CULTURAL REMITTANCES

Peggy Levitt (1998:933–34) identifies social remittances as distinct both from economic remittances and from the overarching social changes brought about by globalization. They are, among other things, "normative structures" (ideas, values, and beliefs) that are transmitted through "systems of practice" (actions shaped by normative structures). They are transmitted by individuals to individuals at the local

Figure 2.1. A migrant's house next to the old house.

village level. This "transnationalism from below" contrasts with the transnational capitalist system precisely in that it is a process in which individuals bring about cultural change in others. I prefer to see these as cultural, rather than social, remittances. One such cultural remittance is Evangelical Protestantism. It is transmitted by individual converts to other individuals, who decide whether or not to accept it. The "systems of practice" of non-Catholics in Mixtec communities are the church services and other activities engaged in by converts, through which they communicate the messages of Evangelicalism. Conversion is rarely the product of missionary activities in the Mixteca. Rather, it is individuals who take the message to their villages. With a few exceptions, the church organizations to which converts belong were established by Mexican migrants to the United States.

In the original development of capitalism, Protestantism contributed to the breakdown of the traditional social and economic system. Instead of looking to the good of the community, Protestants were free to pursue their individual benefits. Because they worked hard and did not spend money on expenses such as alcohol and parties, they tended to have more consumer goods and more money to improve their homes. The success of capitalism and Protestantism in Europe and the United States is a testament to the fit between their messages, which essentially comprise modernity. In the Mixtec villages, however, non-Catholics are not really free of the constraints of the community. More important, they do not seem to want such

Figure 2.2. Buses leave Tlaxiaco every Saturday bound for agricultural communities—migrant destinations—in northern Mexico.

freedom. They are content to participate in the secular communal activities as long as they are not required to support the Catholic fiestas. While some Catholics complain that the non-Catholics do not contribute their fair share, they actually do. Non-Catholics participate in the non-Catholic aspects of usos y costumbres, taking on the nonreligious cargos and contributing tequio. Non-Catholic migrants also send economic remittances for projects planned and carried out by the entire village. I know one non-Catholic minister who lives in California and has only been to his village once since he was an infant. He continues to send money for the upkeep of the public buildings and other community development works in the village. Like the Catholics, the non-Catholics accept, change, and repurpose symbols of modernity like the cell phone. In both cases, the cell phones are used to maintain the traditional community as well as to participate in modern activities such as coordinating the installation of potable water systems in the villages. Whether Catholics or non-Catholics, the villagers are all Mixtec.

MIXTEC COMMUNITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

It is hard to imagine a difference greater than that between the traditional Mixtec village and the places that Mixtecs migrate to. The small, remote villages embody

the essence of tradition and non-modernity, while the destinations of the migrants are by comparison centers of capitalist globalization and consumerism. In the villages there are symptoms of modernity, such as stereo systems, televisions, and large US-made vehicles, and also the idea that owning them is a good thing. There is at the same time the curious practice of using the wages of migrants to remain non-modern. The role of non-Catholics in this conjunction is of particular interest to me.

As I pointed out in chapter 1, the tradition of usos y costumbres is still prevalent in the Mixteca region.[2] This tradition is, in many respects, similar to those that held society together before the great transformation in England. The land is held in common by the community. It cannot be sold to anyone outside the community. Reciprocity is still extremely important as a means of exchange. Each village requires its members to fulfill certain tasks, all for no pay. The market economy is known but is not well understood by people who have not migrated. The migrants understand it, of course, but many are still drawn to the village, where they are part of a communal web that makes sense to them. Here, consumer goods are desirable but service to the community is essential.

The economic system that prevails in most Mixtec villages includes reciprocity as well as redistribution and the market system. Everyone knows that if you go to the little store you must have money to buy anything. But most people do not really have to buy very much at the little stores. Most people participate in a complex form of reciprocity and redistribution as their major system of exchange. Hence, the market is embedded in the social system rather than the reverse.

Reciprocity

I had a running joke with several people during my fieldwork in the Mixteca as to what cost money and what was "free." In this context, just about everything is free. For example, the chicks that hatch are free, and the feed they live on is mainly available in and around the household, so it is also free. Women plan their chicken production so that there will be lots of chickens available at fiesta times. Women kill and cook most of these chickens themselves, but chickens are sometimes available in exchange for other products from the community. Chickens, therefore, are, in general, entirely within the reciprocity system.

I once asked my friend Magdalena to show me how to make mole in the style of her village. This required a chicken. She had no adult chickens, so she went to other women in the village. No one had chickens because it was a period of low chicken consumption. Magdalena finally found a chicken for sale for US$14—an outrageous price.[3] Here she was, a victim of supply and demand. "If you don't want to

pay that price, then I don't need to sell it," said the owner of the chicken. Magdalena needed a chicken, and since the supply was limited, she had to pay the market price. This became part of the joke about what is free versus what costs money. If she had had a full-grown chicken it would have been free.

Another example is the use of firewood to cook with and for heat. Firewood is becoming scarce, and the government is encouraging people to use propane stoves instead. Members of Mixtec communities have the right to collect dry wood on community land. This task is ever more difficult. In 2004 a full day collecting firewood on foot yielded only enough for three days for a household. Nevertheless, firewood is free, whereas propane costs money. While some families own gas stoves as a status symbol, few use them regularly. They cost money to run. Labor is not yet commoditized, at least in the villages.

Redistribution

Tequio, what anthropologists call corvée labor, is also part of the traditional system. Every week, each family in the village is expected to provide one family member to volunteer for work decided on by the community councils. This is a type of redistribution, where the government requires a labor tax. Traditionally, tequio labor was/is considered free, as it does not require money. There is usually a surplus of labor as there is no employment in the villages; in this context, all labor is free.

This system operated largely outside the market until people began migrating. Suddenly, families found themselves with no one to contribute the required labor. Eventually, in many cases, migrants began to allocate part of the remittances they sent to their families to pay for the lost tequio. In this way, labor became transformed into cash and commoditized, at least for some.

The fiesta system, which is the main form of redistribution in the villages, is also regulated by usos y costumbres. Ideally, the fiesta hosts give away large amounts of goods, thus redistributing wealth and gaining prestige and power. Reciprocity is also an essential element of the system, as relatives, fictive kin, and others contribute goods. Some of these are consumer goods but most are produced in the village or within the noncash economy.

Now, migration has brought globalization and the market economy into the fiesta system. Fiesta hosts who return only to fulfill their cargos are expected to have money to buy the food, fireworks, and other necessary goods and services. These are all usually still couched in the parlance of reciprocity. As with tequio, members who are not able to serve in person are expected to pay money to the community. The fiesta hosts' migrant kin contribute their share to the fiestas, but they contribute mostly money, as they are largely outside the system of reciprocal relations.

One of the traditional events of a fiesta is bull riding by young men. Currently, there are rarely enough young men in the villages (they are all in the migrant stream), and bull riders must be hired from outside. This is done with money sent by migrants. In most villages, the number of fiestas held every year is constantly decreasing, because there are no longer enough people willing to host a particular fiesta. Migration and the money economy reduce the commitment to traditional rituals. Money arrives by telegram or ATM deposits to those with relatives in the United States. These and many other changes are having a major result: people are becoming ever more aware of the usefulness of being able to calculate the money value of anything.

It is in the interstices between what "costs money" and what is "free" that the issue of continuing membership in the village comes to the fore. The labor of the migrants is no longer free: it is replaced by money, and some are less willing to give service to the community because the cash worth of their labor as migrants is clearly higher to them than the value of labor in the village. At the same time, some migrants use their newfound cash to perpetuate the traditional system. They carefully save the money they earn in order to be able to give service without pay in the village. Although the number of cargos related to the Catholic Church and its fiestas is diminishing in most villages, non-religious cargos continue to be filled. This compromise between the secular and the religious is similar to processes in other parts of Latin America, but the importance of maintaining village identity and allegiance is much greater among Mixtecs than in other groups. In this way, globalization, migration, and the money economy are helping to continue the tradition of usos y costumbres. This allegiance to the villages and their traditions is an important element in the transnational Mixtec communities that celebrate village identity and solidarity.

It seems clear that a great transformation is at work in Mixtec society today. Working conditions for migrants are perhaps not as dreadful as in eighteenth-century England, but they are far below the norm for workers in the United States or Mexico. Most Mixtecs find jobs in agriculture, which is not regulated by most US labor laws. Many Mixtecs migrated to the United States after the 1987 cutoff date for legalization under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. This means that they have far fewer rights than legal residents. They are not likely to complain about their working conditions. They are excluded from the pattern followed by former immigrant populations: upward mobility and eventual assimilation. In this respect, they are the embodiment of the effects of neoliberal policies and their similarity to the harshness of the original great transformation.

The eventual outcome of this transformation is still difficult to foresee, or even imagine. Mixtecs are torn between the comfort of tradition and the allure of

modernity—are they mutually exclusive? Is there such a thing as indigenous modernity? Perhaps if we see Mixtecs' behaviors as "indigenous modernities" (Pitarch and Orobitg 2012), we can begin to understand what is going on.

GLOBALIZATION AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

An increase in opportunities for individual choice is an important aspect of modernity. Because of globalization, Mixtecs now have more opportunities for individual choices than did their ancestors. One of the important choices is conversion to non-Catholic faiths. Although Pentecostalism, the form of non-Catholicism most frequently chosen by Mixtecs, is seen as the reverse of modern by many in US society (Harding 1991:373–74), it nevertheless has the same characteristics as Calvinism in comparison to Catholicism: rejection of the saints, abstention from earthly vices, and hard work. Most important, it establishes the individual, rather than the community, as the agent deciding religious beliefs and behavior.

Pentecostalism is part of the strange new world being confronted by Mixtecs. It is part of the globalization package challenging Mixtec communities both in the Mixteca and in the migrant communities. Freedom of religion offers individuals choices beyond those available in the traditional folk-Catholic system. They decide, as individuals, what to believe and how to behave. So, Mixtecs are dealing with the question of Catholicism—the traditional system that dictates behavior in a society based on kinship relations and reciprocity—against non-Catholic systems that allow for individuals' economic betterment to the exclusion of the traditional community. But the Mixtec emphasis on the community as the basis for identity and action ameliorates the emphasis on the individual that is the basis for modern identity. Non-Catholics are making a radical move to change Mixtec identity from one tied to local saints and fiestas to one tied to community participation regardless of religious affiliation. Allegiance to the village is possible, in some cases, without continuing all the traditions. Indeed, even the Catholic traditions are changing in response to globalization and migration: there are fewer fiestas than before.

Until now, in spite of their difficulties in the face of neoliberalism, Mixtecs have not wholeheartedly accepted Pentecostalism. It represents, after all, only one possible choice of religious behavior. The attraction of the folk-Catholic traditions of the villages is still more powerful for most. And the traditional system itself is changing in response to the impacts of globalization, migration, and the ensuing embrace of some aspects of modernity.

INDIGENOUS MODERNITIES

From the global perspective of the nations of the core, modernity is assumed to be the goal of all social processes currently under way. But I wonder why all nations must be modern, at least in the way that most people interpret modernity. Is there really no alternative? While it seems likely that modernity will continue to be the accepted paradigm in global studies, some scholars question its legitimacy. Is there, perhaps, more than one modernity?

Arjun Appadurai (1996:65), in his freewheeling discussion of the topic, suggests the existence of "alternative, interactive modernities." In the context of the world beyond Europe, Raymond M. Lee (2008) proposes a view of two modernities: first and second. First modernity is the modernity I have been discussing in this chapter. Second modernity is what is following in the aftermath. It is more accurate to describe this process as creating modernities, for there are many and they are growing. This process is still going forward:

> Rather than imagining modernity in its pristine form, it is more practical to envisage the global spread of modernity as resulting in no single agreed idea of modernity, multiple ways of interpreting modernity and an openness that gives rise to new theories of modernity. (Lee 2008:65)

Escobar dismisses this apparent opening of the modernity paradigm as "a reflection of a eurocentered social order, under the assumption that modernity is now everywhere, an ubiquitous and ineluctable social fact" (Escobar 2007:183). For Escobar, terms such as *postmodernity*, *alterity*, and *subaltern processes* are all tarred with the Eurocentric brush: they all assume the Eurocentric view of modernity as the basic paradigm. He, too, proposes alternative modernities but rooted in the Latin American experience rather than in Europe's (Escobar 2007:180; 2008:131). Other Latin Americanist writers have similar ideas, but they seem mainly to focus on the cultures of indigenous peoples as models for some New World society (e.g., Aparicio and Blaser 2008:66–71; Van Cott 2007:135–36).

Marshall Sahlins, Pedro Pitarch and Gemma Orobitg, Anath Ariel de Vidas, and Priti Singh focus specifically on the ways that indigenous people as social entities respond to the impulse of modernity. For Sahlins (1999:v),

> [T]o speak of the historical agency of indigenous peoples, true as it may be, is to ignore the tyranny of the Western world-system, thus to conspire intellectually in its violence and domination. Whereas, to speak of the systematic hegemony of imperialism, true as it may be, is to ignore the peoples' struggles for cultural survival, thus to conspire intellectually in Western violence and domination.

Pitarch and Orobitg (2012:15), on the other hand, propose a view of modernity and tradition not as opposing forces or historical phases but rather in terms of "affinities, contrasts and interchanges" between both terms. They recommend seeing indigenous people as defined not by their opposition to modernity but rather as sophisticated cultural forms able to develop a dialogue with new global processes. Ariel de Vidas (2006:5) points out that all cultures are continuously engaged in the process of change. In this context, she recommends seeing the ways that globalization is changing indigenous people as the election of new options of value systems that can oscillate between the holism of the traditional cultures and groups of values that come from outside. Singh (2011:57–58) looks to the emerging generation of indigenous leaders to organize themselves and their societies as having primordial rights, based on their claims of having been in the same geographical location since well before the existence of the nation-state. These rights precede the nation-state and so are different from those of nonindigenous minorities, whose rights are bestowed by the nation-state. These indigenous rights can be the basis for social movements within the indigenous groups.

Where do the Mixtecs fit in these suggested modernities? They are oscillating between their traditional culture and elements of modernity. They see tradition and modernity as simultaneous. As I will show in the following chapters, they are in the process of choosing which aspects of modernity to embrace (such as paved roads) and which to reject (such as individual ownership of land). This is a complex, ongoing process that is different in each community. Conversion to non-Catholic faiths is a catalyst for change, but change occurs in the context of global forces.

CONCLUSION

This discussion of paradigms and theories has taken us far from the daily reality of the world—modern or not. So I return to the question at the end of chapter 1: Are Mixtecs becoming modern? Are Mixtecs also looking for alternatives to modernity? Or will their destiny be assimilation into US culture at the bottom of the ethnic ladder? There are those who are still willing to defend their rights to their ancestral land and their cultural traditions. More and more, these traditions are being changed in order to accommodate modernity. This hybrid modernity includes non-Catholics as members of the traditional community. Mixtecs are finding ways to embrace certain aspects of certain kinds of modernity while maintaining some aspects of their ancestral culture. The real lives of Mixtecs as presented in the following chapters exemplify the ways that economic models such as neoliberalism, rather than predicting or explaining behavior, instead impact the lives of people without the inventors of the models even noticing. The ability to survive these impacts while part of

the modern system is one aspect of Mixtec modernity. The ability to adapt their traditional cultures without allowing the modern world to destroy them is another.

NOTES

1. Some examples of such lists can be found in Escobar (2007:181–82) and Knight (2007:92–105).

2. This is how earlier anthropologists (e.g., Cancian 1965, Foster 1967) described Latin American villages. Under the prevailing paradigm, it has been supposed that such traditions had disappeared before modernity's relentless trajectory.

3. As I was the one who needed the chicken, I paid the $14. There are, of course, commercially produced chickens available in the town of Tlaxiaco, two hours away. But if I had bought such a chicken, for about US$3, it would have been unacceptable. Chickens raised in the village are seen as much preferable to commercially raised chickens, although my US palate deems the village chickens tough and stringy compared to commercial ones.

3

San Juan Mixtepec

Ñuu Vicu, the Land of Clouds[1]

THE MUNICIPIO

The municipio of San Juan Mixtepec is one of the most studied communities in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca. Federico Besserer has spent the better part of the last twenty years documenting and tracing the travels of the transnational community of Mixtepec (Besserer 2002, 2004, 1999). Before Besserer, Steven Edinger (1985) published a very informative book on the community and the path of the migrants to Baja California and the United States. Together, these works comprise the most research done in a single Mixtec community in the contemporary age. In other words, there are literally thousands of communities in the region that have not been studied. Because of this, I had determined before arriving in the Mixteca that I would not work there. My idea was to expand on the extremely small number of existing studies. However, circumstances dictated that I conduct research in the community.

I had met a family with relatives in the village of San Juan itself.[2] These relatives were able to provide me with a Mixteco-Spanish interpreter and knew a great deal about the municipio. Also, if my work was to be on the effects of immigration on communities in the region, Mixtepec was ideal. It has an established network of transnational communities that includes at least twenty-five of the fifty US states and several states in Mexico (Besserer 2004). Finally, the work of Edinger and Besserer provides much more background on Mixtepec than exists for any other community in the Mixteca. In any event, my plan was to work in two of the agencias of Mixtepec rather than in the municipio village itself. And no one had done

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any research on religious conversion or on non-Catholics in the municipio as a whole. I decided I could use the existing information as a backdrop for my research.

THE SETTING

The town of Tlaxiaco is the district seat of the district of Tlaxiaco, the closest town from Mixtepec that is on a paved road. Tlaxiaco also has the closest gasoline station, the closest landline telephone, and the closest buses to places beyond the Mixteca. Buses leave regularly to connect to the places that Mixtecs travel to: Sinaloa, Sonora, Baja California, and into the United States.

There is basically one circular paved road around the region where Mixtepec is located (see figure 1.1), and it is of a low grade of asphalt. There is no regular bus service in any part of what might be called "the great unpaved," the area within and around the paved road. Many of the villages in the municipio of Mixtepec remain reachable only on foot. In any event, the vast majority of people in this region usually walk to their destinations; when possible, they get rides in passing vehicles, some of which charge for the lift. The only regular transportation between San Juan and Tlaxiaco are vans run by private companies and individuals. Rather than having a fixed timetable, the vans leave when they are full. Taxis are available in Mixtepec. They are used mainly on market day, when customers who do not own other means of transportation need to transport pigs, chickens, and large amounts of food purchased at the market from San Juan to their home villages.

One reason for my initial reluctance to work in Mixtepec is the difficulty of reaching it. Even finding the road from Tlaxiaco is difficult; there are no signs, of course. Look for the road that goes past the junkyard called "el freeway." It is twenty-five miles on a dirt road from Tlaxiaco to San Juan village; it takes two hours to drive it. The road goes through varied terrain for about five miles. Then, where Mixtepec's territory begins, the road winds wildly through and over the enormous pine forest that is now the municipio's most valuable resource. The Mixtepecos understand this and have banned anyone—Mixtepeco or not—from cutting green trees.

One of the cargos that people are expected to serve, in order to maintain their membership in the community, is as guardians of the forest—it is part of the *bienes comunales* cargo. The bienes comunales committees are responsible for preventing forest fires and extinguishing them when they occur. The committees are also charged with preventing poaching, much of which is done by people who are not from Mixtepec. Meanwhile, the vast majority of cooking in the community is done over wood fires. This fact, along with the large market for pine wood in Tlaxiaco, has resulted in some outsiders—and a few Mixtepecos too—cutting pine trees that are still green.

Eventually, the road from Tlaxiaco to Mixtepec goes through several villages surrounded by sparsely vegetated grazing land and fields where corn is planted by some. Finally, the road leads to bluffs that overlook the municipio village of San Juan. This community has some of the few lands that are almost flat. In addition, the Mixteco River runs through the village. A few families have built a dam along part of the river and use the water to irrigate their cornfields. Still, in 2004 the price of corn imported from the United States was cheaper than corn produced in Mexico (see chapter 2).[3]

The village of San Juan is somewhat unusual in that it has maintained much of its traditional fiesta system. In this village, the job of mayordomo, the sponsor of the fiesta, along with all the lesser cargos, is voluntary—people volunteer rather than waiting to be elected. In 2004 some villagers had been waiting up to five years to take on their posts. Many of these people are not actually resident in the village but will return to complete their cargos when the time comes. The fiesta system is being maintained by the contributions of migrants; this is true of all the communities in the Mixteca, but San Juan seems to have a greater commitment on the part of its members to the maintenance of the traditional culture. The village is also distinct in that most of the women wear the traditional dress, consisting of a long skirt decorated with lace, a peasant blouse, and a *rebozo*—the standard shawl worn by Mexican women in many other places as well. The women also carry baskets using a tump line on their heads, a distinctive Mixtec touch.

Residents of the village of San Juan maintain their traditional customs in spite of the fact that most people spend time in El Norte."[4] I estimated that 40 percent of the vehicles in the village had license plates from the US. They represented twenty-two different states. Evidence of migrants and the remittances they send to their families is clear from the houses in the village. Many house sites have at least two structures: the old, original house, and the new house built by migrants. In many cases, the residents actually occupy the old house. They prefer to cook over wood fires rather than on gas stoves. Amenities such as gas stoves, running water, and indoor plumbing are present in most of the new houses. The people who build the houses are not usually in the village, but in the United States. In a few cases, the relatives of the owners rent out rooms to non-villagers such as schoolteachers. I rented such a room during my fieldwork in Mixtepec.

San Juan has a high percentage of people in the migrant stream. There are new vehicles on the dirt streets. Many members of the village have stereo systems and televisions, though reception is minimal. Some play videos—commercially produced or made in the village. There is an Internet café where young people go to *chatear* (chat). The village has a webpage. Yet the fiesta system is still very strong. Here we see one example of selective modernity—people go to the Internet café

in their traditional clothes. They decide what aspects of modernity to embrace and what to reject. One such element is Pentecostalism, which the people of San Juan have so far roundly rejected. There are not many non-Catholics in the pueblo: about 9 percent,[5] a figure similar to that of Oaxaca as a whole. I decided to do fieldwork in the two agencias of San Lucas and San Pedro Yososcuá, where there are more non-Catholics. Although I took in events in the municipio village, my main focus was actually on these two agencias.

TWO AGENCIAS: SAN LUCAS AND SAN PEDRO YOSOSCUÁ

These two villages are about equidistant from San Juan, and they have approximately the same number of inhabitants (200). There were no non-Catholics in either of these villages until the 1990s, when members of the communities who had been converted elsewhere returned and began to hold services. They then began converting members of the villages. In both cases, these behaviors were met with anger from the Catholics. The hermanos have tried to fit into their communities as well as possible. They claim that they have never refused to accept cargos in their villages; they only reject the religious cargos. They report for tequio as required. Both of these points have been challenged by Catholics, but I saw non-Catholics in both capacities in both villages.

The Catholic aspects of the fiesta system have become much less extravagant in both communities. While the nonreligious cargos are filled (sometimes by non-Catholics), the religious cargos are not receiving the support that they used to. In each village there traditionally were two fiestas. Each fiesta had two mayordomos, who depended on their extended families in the village, as well as the migrant population, to contribute to their fiestas. In this way, the burden of the cargo was spread over kin networks in an ongoing system of reciprocity (Monaghan 1995). Now there is only one fiesta and only one mayordomo in each village. Both mayordomos for 2004 had spent many years outside the village; they had saved money to be able to host the fiestas. They had very few kin in the villages and they were expected to take on all the expenses of the fiestas. This is very different from the traditional ways. The lack of interest on the part of village members in sponsoring fiestas is an indication that the fiesta is less important than the nonreligious cargos, which people willingly maintain in order to continue being members of the village.

In many ways, San Lucas and Yososcuá are very similar. But they differ in how the members of the two communities have dealt with the increasing numbers of non-Catholics.

San Lucas

San Lucas is to the southeast of San Juan Mixtepec, along the road to Santa María Teposlantongo. The public buildings—the Catholic Church, the ayuntamiento—are clustered at the entrance of the village. As in many Mixtec villages, the cluster tends toward the vertical. The public buildings and many of the houses are backed up against a steep hill. The Catholic church, the school, and the ayuntamiento are all at somewhat different heights.[6] The basketball court/dance floor is next to the school, which is located in the flattest part of the village. The houses are in two groups: on two roads along the hillside behind the ayuntamiento and spread out behind the school. While there is plenty of room around and between the houses, they are aligned along the roads, in rows.

San Lucas has lost many members to emigration, but the migrants have not contributed significantly to the upkeep or improvement of the village. In other communities, migrants pay for various projects decided on by the leaders. These projects vary from a new basketball court to potable water for all residents. In many villages migrants pay to maintain the cemetery or improve it with walls and chapels. This is not the case in San Lucas, where individual households tend to spend money on household expenses rather than on community development.

Non-Catholic Churches in San Lucas

The two non-Catholic churches are located far from the center of the village. The Trinitarian church is in the area where the houses spread out behind the school. The Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas sits on a promontory overlooking empty land and a few houses.

According to the members of the village, there were never any hermanos in San Lucas before migrants began returning. The first migrant convert to return to San Lucas arrived in 1991. I will call him Hermano Hermilo. He had been baptized in the name of the Trinity in the United States. He had converted in Oregon, when he was sick. He was alone, with no one to help him. I asked him if he had prayed to San Lucas, the village patron saint. He said, "Yes, I clamored for him [*clamé por él*]. But how could he travel so far? [(i.e., to Oregon from San Lucas)]? But Jesus is everywhere." This statement is a window onto the convert's view of the saints. Each village has its own saints, rooted in the village. These saints (the physical objects) are seen as the ones who help when people pray to them. But the saints are in the village, far from the places people migrate to. Jesus, who is not perceived as a sacred object in a village, is more reachable from the migrant stream than the village saints.

When Hermano Hermilo returned to San Lucas, he began to hold services in a private home for people who were interested in the message he brought. Eventually

they built a church. There are now about twenty members, all converted by him. He does not baptize people, however. This group is affiliated with the Iglesia Pentecostés in Jamiltepec, to the south of the region of San Lucas; the pastor of that church goes to San Lucas for baptisms as they are needed. The pastor ("si usted dice," "if you say so"), is not formally the pastor of this church, but he obviously is the leader of the group, who call him "the pastor."

The church in San Lucas has no name; Hermano Hermilo is happy about this. He pointed out that there are no denominations in the Bible. The group is affiliated with other Trinitarian congregations in the municipio, all of which are at approximately the same stage of growth as the one in San Lucas. There seem to be no established churches or congregations outside the Mixteca region that contribute money or other kinds of help to the members of this church. Despite the fact that one of the themes of the sermons in the church was that God will help the members "salir adelante" (get ahead), there were no significant wealth differences between the Catholics and non-Catholics. The pastor, for example, lives in a one-room house with a dirt floor.

Three years after Hermano Hermilo returned to San Lucas, another convert returned. This man, Hermano Felipe, had left the village in the 1970s, one of the first to do so. He never went to the United States, but worked the fields in Culiacán and Baja California. He had been baptized in the name of Jesucristo in San Quintín, Baja California, in 1988. When he returned to San Lucas in 1994 he found that there were already seven or eight other people in San Lucas who had been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ during their years of migration.

Although they converted in different communities, they had all been baptized into the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas (IJA). By the 1990s, this church was already an established, transnational community with churches in many parts of Mexico and the United States. The largest Mixtec IJA church in Mexico is located in Juxtlahuaca, the seat of the district that includes Mixtepec. This congregation was founded by returning migrants in the 1980s. There are congregations of the church in the nearby village of Santa María Teposlantongo and other communities in the region, including Yososcuá. Thus Hermano Felipe's congregation is part of a larger group of people close by as well as far away from the Mixteca region; more sources of economic and social support from other church members are available to him than to Hermano Hermilo's congregation.

Like Hermano Hermilo, Hermano Felipe became known as the leader of his church because he was the one who offered to hold services in his house. Unlike Hermano Hermilo, he could count on help from other, more established congregations of his church. The IJA churches in Santa Maria, California and Lázaro Cárdenas, Baja California, sent money to help the hermanos in San Lucas build a

Figure 3.1. Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas, San Lucas.

church. Although Hermano Felipe receives no pay for leading the church, the donations from the local members, combined with money from other congregations, have made it possible to establish a growing congregation of the IJA in San Lucas. In 2004, there were about forty members of the church, including twenty who were outside of the village. This is twice as many members as Hermano Hermilo's church, and Hermano Hermilo returned to the village before Hermano Felipe.

DISCUSSION

The two non-Catholic churches in San Lucas have a great deal in common. Both were founded by returning migrants in the 1990s. The members of both are not significantly better off economically than their Catholic fellow villagers. Together, the members of the churches have managed to remain in the village without being expelled. However, there are some distinctions between the two. The IJA is part of a large transnational network of churches with Mixtec members. The smaller of these churches, such as the one in San Lucas, receive monetary support from the other church congregations. There are congregations in many of the agencias of the Mixteca region. In Juxtlahuaca, there is a huge confraternidad every year, with thousands of people in attendance from all parts of Mexico and the United States. There is a sense of being in a much larger, supportive entity than in the small congregation

with no name. Although the pastor of the Trinitarian church is affiliated with a Trinitarian pastor in Jamiltepec, there does not seem to be any larger group that contributes to the San Lucas congregation. Perhaps for these reasons the church with no name has a smaller congregation than the IJA. However, there is evidence that Mixtecs convert to the IJA because they find other Mixtecs in the IJA congregations throughout the migrant stream. They have developed their own "wing" of the church, where they congregate with fellow villagers in the communities to which they migrate. This sense of solidarity within the larger church is somehow missing from the Trinitarian churches in the Mixteca.

RELATIONS BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND NON-CATHOLICS

At first, the Catholic members of the village were unhappy about the hermanos. The Catholics repeated what the priests say, which is that a Catholic must never change religion. There were heated arguments about the refusal of the non-Catholics to participate in religious cargos. Eventually, the village held an assembly in the ayuntamiento building. There were arguments and disagreements. Finally, they reached an agreement to live and let live. One non-Catholic said to me, "los padres no pueden obligar a la gente de ser católicos" (the priests cannot oblige people to be Catholics). Some of the Catholics wanted to move the saint from the church in San Lucas to another community, where presumably there were fewer non-Catholics. The assembly voted and decided to keep the saint in the San Lucas Catholic church and continue holding the fiestas as always. The non-Catholics see the preparations for the fiesta as tequio, not a cargo. They clean around the school and the agencia building but not in the Catholic church. At the same time, non-Catholics assume more of the nonreligious cargos.

The Catholics accepted this *ajuste* (adjustment). One member of the IJA said that the Catholics and non-Catholics in the village "no se llevan bien" (don't get along very well), but still, "ya se acostumbraron la gente" (the Catholics have become accustomed to the non-Catholics). Thus, calm arrived in San Lucas. As one non-Catholic said, "aquí estamos en paz" (here we are at peace). Several people, both Catholic and non-Catholic, told me that there is a law saying Mexico has freedom of religion. One Catholic man commented that the reason there are so many hermanos is that the priests don't go to the villages. They only go once a year (for the fiesta). If the priests lived in the villages, as the leaders of the hermanos do, there would be fewer converts.

In San Lucas, non-Catholics now give service in the secular cargos such as the water committee, the committee in charge of roads, and bienes comunales—the guardians of the forest and other community resources. In fact, the agente—the

most powerful cargo—was held by Hermano Hermilo in 2004. He was nominated at the assembly, but he pointed out in the gathering that this cargo has religious aspects: the agente helps organize the annual fiesta, for example. He said he would only be agente if the people did not require that he change his beliefs, or act in a supportive role toward the Catholic Church. The assembly elected him. One of the reasons people give for this, I was told, is that they know a convert will not drink and is less likely to divert money from the community to himself. And although Hermano Hermilo said there were some things that he would not do, I saw him helping out during the fiesta in the village. For example, in spite of the opposition to fireworks among the non-Catholics, he was in charge of the fireworks set off from statues of papier-mâché bulls. He said his role was to make sure no one got hurt, to maintain peace and order among people who were drinking and feasting. In that sense, his overseeing the fireworks was part of his job of maintaining order. He did not seem to have a problem with this obvious blurring of the line between the religious and secular duties of the agente. These are the ways that the members of the community have resolved the earlier conflicts and agreed to get along as best they can.

When I asked people in San Lucas why there are more hermanos in San Lucas than in other villages, one explanation was that the members of the village knew that in the nearby community of Santa María Teposlantongo, several converts had already returned and refused to take on the religious cargos. Evidently, the community formulated an idea of what might happen when people returned to San Lucas from the north. This, in turn, is offered as the reason why there is not a great deal of conflict in San Lucas today. In addition, I have heard from many members of the village that migrants to Baja California, and especially the United States, have seen many non-Catholic congregations beyond the world of San Juan Mixtepec. Knowing that there are religions other than Catholicism has become a part of the migrant experience. One man, a migrant who normally lives in Baja California, commented that in the villages from which there is a great deal of migration, the Catholics adjust more quickly than those communities with only a small rate of migration.

San Pedro Yososcuá

This village is about the same distance as San Lucas from Mixtepec but toward the West, in the direction of Tlaxiaco. Unlike San Lucas, it is extremely dispersed. The main buildings—ayuntamiento, school, Catholic church—are spread apart over a distance of about 400 yards. Also unlike San Lucas, the village has quite a lot of flat land, though not much is planted. The houses are also separated by large spaces. Where the houses in San Lucas can all be reached easily on foot from the center of the village, the houses in Yososcuá require a vehicle to reach them. The

houses, and the roads and paths they are on, are arranged in a seemingly haphazard pattern. the The two non-Catholic churches are each separated from the ayuntamiento by large spaces.

In Yososcuá, migrants have made more investments in the community's buildings than migrants have made in San Lucas. In Yososcuá, there is a newly constructed ayuntamiento, and the Catholic church has been significantly refurbished, all with migrant money. The cemetery is very well maintained, also due to migrant funds.

NON-CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN YOSOSCUÁ

Like San Lucas, Yososcuá has a congregation of the IJA and a Trinitarian congregation, the Templo Evangélico de Agua Viva. This latter church is affiliated with a congregation in Baja California called La Trinidad. It is not affiliated with the Trinitarian church in San Lucas. There are other congregations of this church in northern Mexico and in the United States; there are also some in the nearby Mexican state of Guerrero. The pastor of the church in Yososcuá, Hermano Tiburcio, was baptized in Baja California. He was the first non-Catholic to return to the village, in 1996. This man had leaflets from the main church to pass out as he went from door to door. In 2004 there were about forty members of this church. About fifteen had converted in the village. Some of the members were in Baja California, but they still are counted. As the pastor said, "some people convert elsewhere, but it doesn't matter what church they are baptized in, when they return, if they are from this pueblo, that's their identity." As long as they are Trinitarian and Pentecostal.

This congregation is still considered a mission, so the members are not required to send money to the church in Baja California that is sponsoring them. They do send letters reporting their activities. Sometimes hermanos from the churches in Baja California visit the church in Yososcuá to convey the encouragement of the Baja California groups in Yososcuá's project. The church itself is a large, two-story structure in a village of one-story buildings. It is evident that this congregation has received quite a bit of help from outside. During the services, the leaders ask the people to pray for the agente, the members, the village council, and all the members from the village in various places, including Baja California, Oregon, and Washington. Unlike the Trinitarian church in San Lucas, the one in Yososcuá clearly sees itself as part of a much larger group.

In 1997 a man whom I will call Hermano Francisco returned to Yososcuá. Since 1975 he had migrated to many parts of Mexico and the United States. He was baptized in the IJA in Baja California in 1992. He was the first member of the IJA to return to Yososcuá. He began proselytizing in the village immediately. According to him, three people converted on the first day. Like Hermano Hermilo in San Lucas,

Hermano Francisco does not think of himself as a pastor. He says he is the pastor "si usted dice" (if you say so). Other members of the church see him as the leader. Hermano Francisco has been a US resident since 1987, and he returned regularly to the US to maintain that status. Although other church members asked him to stay in Yososcuá, he kept going back to the United States. In 2001 or 2002, he was injured on a job in the United States. Then he went to Yososcuá to get better. Although he said that he still wants to go to the United States to work, he has remained in Yososcuá since his return in 2002. In 2004 there were about twenty members of the IJA, half in the village and half in the United States.

DISCUSSION

In Yososcuá, the economic situations of the churches seem to be the reverse of those in San Lucas. The Trinitarian church is large and well appointed, while the IJA church is still under construction. The Trinitarian members are much better dressed than those of the IJA, and they have more musical instruments. Unlike the Trinitarians in San Lucas, this church has affiliations with churches in Baja California and other locations. These churches have clearly been very helpful to the congregation. The IJA congregation, while enjoying the support of the Santa Maria, California, church, as well as the church in nearby Juxtlahuaca, is still struggling. The only musical instrument in the IJA church is an acoustic guitar, played by the pastor. The members, including the pastor, dress very poorly.

RELATIONS BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND NON-CATHOLICS IN YOSOSCUÁ

In contrast to the situation in San Lucas, there has been no agreement between the Catholics and the non-Catholics in Yososcuá. When I interviewed the agente (a Catholic), he stressed the fact that "ya no somos unidos" (we are no longer united). He demonstrated with two of his fingers: first, he held them together, then he separated them. He pointed to the Catholic church, and said, "that is the church of the *pueblo*," implying that the other two churches were not part of the pueblo. Other Catholic residents of the village reported that some of their relatives had converted, but now all the converts do is try to convert them. Now Catholics and non-Catholics in the same families no longer talk to each other.

The agente said that the non-Catholics "no cooperan" (don't contribute) to the upkeep of the village. They only do things to help themselves, not the community. He said they do not participate in any of the cargos or in tequio. However, I saw all the adult members of the Templo de Agua Viva working on the road in the village, and there are several non-Catholics in secular cargos, such as the school committees.

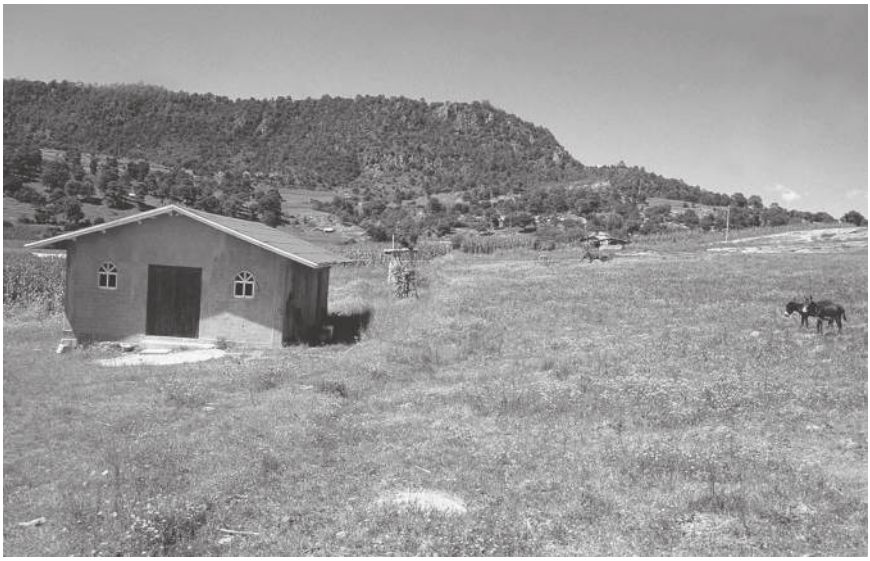

Figure 3.2. Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas, San Pedro Yososcuá.

It seems clear that there is conflict between the Catholics and the non-Catholics in Yososcuá. However, 2004 was not the same as 1978, when the first Evangelicals returned to the Mixteca only to be expelled from their communities. In 2004 it was unlikely that the Catholics would expel the non-Catholics; at that time, both groups knew that there is a law of religious freedom in Mexico, while in 1978, most did not. The members of the village will have to come to some kind of an agreement at some point.

On the last day I was in Yososcuá, the agente told me that the hermanos were planning to establish another community, still within the agencia of Yososcuá but far from the village itself. I had heard of no such plans from the non-Catholics, who had already invested considerable time and money in constructing their church buildings in the village. Evidently, the Catholics were looking for ways to encourage the non-Catholics to take up residence somewhere else. The agente went on to criticize the non-Catholics. He said they want to live in the village for free, that they do not contribute, that they are very hard, very difficult. He said they hate the Catholics. He also said that the hermanos had said that the Catholics did not have the authority to expel them. It is true that the Catholics do not have legal authority to expel the non-Catholics, but without the support of some entity outside the agencia (the presidente municipal of San Juan Mixtepec, for example), as long as the Catholics maintain a large majority in the village they will have the power to

expel the non-Catholics. The Catholics seemed to assume that they would be able to do so and were planning to do so.

The first step in the expulsion process was to try to prevent the non-Catholics from burying their dead in the village cemetery. The right to bury one's dead in the community graveyard is basic to all of the villages in the Mixteca; being denied this right is equivalent to denial of membership in the village. By October 2004, the Catholics had not succeeded in keeping non-Catholics out of the cemetery. The Catholics said they were trying to take it slowly, but they seemed intent on expelling the hermanos, if not from the agencia as a whole, at least from the village.

MIGRATION AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE

The process of conversion in both the agencias is clearly derived from migration. All of the non-Catholic congregations were made up at first by returned migrants who had been baptized outside the Mixteca. Migration has resulted in there being two non-Catholic congregations in each village. However, migration in and of itself does not lead inexorably to conversion. There are many residents of the two agencias who have left and returned without converting. In San Juan pueblo, furthermore, there is a very low incidence of non-Catholics despite the large percentage of residents who have been in the migrant stream. In fact, San Juan is the focus of Besserer's work, which demonstrates that members of this village are maintaining strong ties with the community despite being far away from the home village. These villagers, the great majority Catholics, are still participating actively and extensively in the religious part of the cargo system (Besserer 2004). There has been no reduction in the number of fiestas in San Juan. Thus, there is no easy explanation for the relationship between migration and religious conversion in the Mixteca region. The relationship is there, but it varies from one community to another, depending on the experiences of the members while in the migrant stream. And now, unlike in the 1970s, returned migrants have converted some villagers who have never migrated. So the picture is much more complicated now than when Mixtecs first started going north in large numbers.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS

From the perspective of an outsider, the two villages might seem essentially the same: both are poor, small, far from a paved highway, and inhabited by Mixtecs. In fact, on the issue of non-Catholic members of the village, they are quite different. One has accepted the non-Catholics, and the other has not. How did this come about? Upon taking a closer look at the two communities, several differences appear. These distinctions are made evident in tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.1. Socioeconomic indicators: San Lucas

Inhabited houses	47	
Using gas to cook	5	11%
Using wood to cook	42	89%
With indoor toilet	29	61%
With indoor water	42	89%
With drainage	3	6%
With electricity	45	96%
With no water, drainage, or electricity	0	0%
Marginalization level*	high	

Source: INEGI 2000.

* Dirección General de Población de Oaxaca (General Board of the Population of Oaxaca, DIGEPO). The marginalization rate of each community is based on nine indicators derived from the general census (INEGI 2000). These indicators are: illiteracy, incomplete primary school, dwellings without piped-in water, dwellings without drainage, dwellings without electricity, crowding, community of fewer than five thousand inhabitants, and employed population with two minimum wage salaries or less (DIGEPO 2002, 125).

Table 3.2. Socioeconomic indicators: San Pedro Yososcuá

Inhabited houses	58	
Using gas to cook	0	0%
Using wood to cook	58	100%
With indoor toilet	18	31%
With indoor water	32	55%
With drainage	2	3%
With electricity	47	81%
With no water, drainage, or electricity	8	14%
Marginalization level	very high	

Source: INEGI 2000.

First of all, while both villages are poor, Yososcuá is the poorer one: it is characterized as having a very high degree of marginalization, while the level of marginalization in San Lucas is merely high. The details of this differential marginalization include, for example, the fact that all the households in San Lucas have either water, sewage, or electricity, while in Yososcuá, 14 percent of the households have none of these. In San Lucas, 11 percent of households use gas to cook, while all of the households in Yososcuá cook with wood. It is unlikely that the money to pay for any of these amenities came from working in the village, so these differences indicate differences in migration and remittance patterns.

In Yososcuá, 48 percent of the population is monolingual in Mixteco, while this is true of only 31 percent of those in San Lucas (see tables 3.3 and 3.4). These differences, while small, are indications of different rates of emigration, or at least of return migration. Returning migrants usually arrive loaded down with goods from the United States; they also tend to have saved money, which they spend in the village. In addition, migration in many cases forces people to learn at least some

Table 3.3. Language and religion: San Lucas

Population over 5 years old	219	
Mixteco only	66	30%
Mixteco and Spanish	153	70%
Spanish only	0	0%
Catholic	129	59%
Non-Catholic	87	40%

Source: INEGI 2000.

Table 3.4. Language and religion: San Pedro Yososcuá

Population over 5 years old	200	
Mixteco only	88	44%
Mixteco and Spanish	105	53%
Spanish only	7	3%
Catholic	149	75%
Non-Catholic	51	25%

Source: INEGI 2000.

Spanish in order to be able to operate outside the Mixteca region. The lower score of marginalization and the smaller percentage of monolingual Mixteco speakers in San Lucas implies that there has been more return migration there than in Yososcuá. This in itself leads to a greater willingness to accept non-Catholics.

In general, migrants who are away from the villages send money to their families, but they also send money for the upkeep of the community itself. Clearly, there is a difference between the ways that migrants from Yososcuá spend their money and the spending behavior of the inhabitants of San Lucas. While the investment of migrants in the maintenance of the community buildings is lower in San Lucas, apparently the migrants are using their money to improve their own homes. Thus, the larger percentages of amenities such as gas stoves and toilets in San Lucas. This indicates a greater value on individual or family well-being over that of the village as a whole. This, in turn, implies a greater number of non-Catholics in San Lucas. Although the non-Catholics strive to point out that they contribute tequio and sit on the non-Catholic committees, they do not contribute to the upkeep of the Catholic church or any other sites associated with Catholicism. While there is little evidence overall that non-Catholics are wealthier than Catholics, it appears that they prefer to spend their incomes on nonreligious expenses.

And indeed, there are more non-Catholics in San Lucas: 40 percent as opposed to 25 percent in Yososcuá. This is one reason that there is more conflict in Yososcuá. There is evidently a tipping point at which the Catholics give up trying to expel the non-Catholics: when the number of the latter approaches half the population of the village. Another mediating factor in the different levels of conflict in the two communities is that the first non-Catholic returned to San Lucas in 1991, while the first arrived in Yososcuá in 1997. San Lucas has had six more years to work out the differences between the two groups.

These two communities can be compared with Santiago Asunción, a Mixtec village that now has a majority of non-Catholics (Espinosa Hernández 2003: 52–57,

70–71). In Santiago, all the autoridades are Seventh-day Adventists. The Catholics have been relegated to very minor roles in the village. Even the Catholic church, which is still in the center of the village, is marginal compared to the much larger Adventist church, which dominates the road into town. One might speculate that, given the realities of migration and return migration, Yososcuá might be moving in the direction of San Lucas and San Lucas might be moving in the direction of Santiago Asunción.

MODERNITY AND USOS Y COSTUMBRES

The civil side of the community organization has remained largely unchanged despite emigration and conversion, but the religious aspects of the fiesta system are declining in both villages. This is not only because non-Catholics refuse to participate, but because Catholics too are refusing to assume religious cargos. The reluctance of the villagers to support the Catholic rituals really has not so much to do with religion as with the introduction of the market economy into the social relations of both villages. Clearly the expenses associated with sponsoring several fiestas a year come to be seen as extravagant by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It is possible to remain Catholic, and a member in good standing in the community, if one supports only one fiesta. At the same time, the civil cargos remain necessary to the orderly running of the villages. The fact that some communities in the Mixteca have not gone completely over to the market is unusual; indeed, it is the source of much of the interest of anthropologists. Many out-migrants contribute money as a replacement for their labor toward the cargos today. There has to date been no withdrawal from the secular cargos—Catholics and non-Catholics alike are still willing to contribute their time and labor to the community. This pattern has been reported by Espinosa Hernández (2003) in Santiago Asunción, and can be found in the communities of the expelled in Huajuapan de León (see chapter 5).

Increasingly, Catholics and non-Catholics alike are less enthusiastic about participating in the religious fiestas than in the day-to-day running of the community. In Yososcuá and San Lucas, this is clear from the fact that while the secular cargos are being filled, the religious cargos have now been reduced to only one individual in each village, and there is only one yearly fiesta. In other words, the migrants are rejecting only some of the Catholic aspects of the system of usos y costumbres. It is one thing to reject the entire cargo system; it is another to change the system so that it conforms to the realities of the present day. It seems quite possible that the migrants' identification with and participation in the political and economic life of the villages might continue, even though the religious beliefs and behaviors come to be left to individual choice.

Here is an example of selective modernity, or modernities, as discussed in chapter 2. Mixtecs respond to the responsibilities of hosting fiestas by reducing the number to a manageable level. Indeed, most communities in Mexico celebrate the annual fiesta for the town's patron saint. However, most communities in Mexico do not embrace other aspects of usos y costumbres such as tequio and voluntary service in the secular cargos. Collective ownership of village land is also absent from most communities. The members of San Lucas and San Pedro Yososcuá have decided to maintain the aspects of usos y costumbres that work to integrate individuals into the community regardless of religious beliefs. The remarkable continuity of the system, despite the fact that about half the villagers are outside any village at any given time, is what makes Mixtec villages unusual, perhaps unique. The maintenance of collective ownership of land, while cumbersome, has allowed villages to retain control of their land because outsiders cannot buy it and members of the community cannot sell it except to others in the village. There is no way for development or tourism companies to make inroads into the villages or for logging companies to make off with the pine forest. Poaching exists, but there are cargos to prevent or at least restrain it. Thus, Mixtec villages have found a way to remain Mixtec villages while embracing those aspects of modernity they want to accept. These include large, modern houses as well as non-Catholic religions. As we have seen, the religions are more contentious than the houses, although both stem from modernity. And both villages are dealing with non-Catholics in their own way. They are not abandoning usos y costumbres entirely, however.

While the non-Catholics appear to be modern in that they hold the individual responsible for his or her salvation, separate from any church or clergy, they still participate in the village system, which is basically nonmodern. The willingness of all the members of the villages to perpetuate the traditional village structure indicates an active participation in the creation of a new kind of village, with one foot in the modern world and another in the traditional world of the Mixteca.

NOTES

1. The name Ñuu Vicu, the place of clouds, was the name the Mixtepecos gave to their territory before they were defeated by the Aztecs in 1504 (Edinger 1985:19). The Aztecs imposed the name Mixtepec, which means "place of Mixtecos" (Edinger 1996:10; Dahlgren de Jordán 1966:56). The present-day residents call the place Ñuu Vicu.

2. In order to reduce confusion over place-names, I will use the terms San Juan or San Juan village when referring only to the village of San Juan, and Mixtepec or San Juan Mixtepec when referring to the municipio as a whole.

3. In a clear indication of how NAFTA influences the lives of the poor, consider first that in 2004 the price of subsidized corn produced in the United States was lower than that available to Mexican corn farmers. This outcome may have contributed to the increasing numbers of Mexicans in the United States. Next, consider that in 2007, production of ethanol from US corn caused the price of corn in Mexico to explode, leaving the poorest worse off. This situation doubtless resulted in more Mexicans in the United States.

4. Although the term *El Norte* means "the north," in Mixtepec it refers almost universally to the United States.

5. Unless otherwise stated, all figures are from the Mexican census department, INEGI.

6. This is the name given to the community government building. It houses the offices of the agente and the various cargo holders.

4

San Juan Diquiyú

Village on a Rock

WHY SAN JUAN DIQUIYÚ?

I decided to work in the agencia of San Juan Diquiyú for a variety of reasons, most having to do with the ways it contrasts with the Mixtepec agencias. First, its population (700) is larger than the agencias I worked with in Mixtepec. Second, it is in the district of Huajuapan de León, while Mixtepec is in the district of Juxtlahuaca. Third, the municipio that Diquiyú is in has a low rate of emigration compared with the municipio of San Juan Mixtepec. There is also a smaller percentage of non-Catholics in Diquiyú, and it is much closer to the main highway than is Mixtepec. Intuitively, one might expect that it would have a higher emigration rate, given the ease of leaving, but this is in fact not the case.

In addition, I must admit, the proximity of Diquiyú to the town of Huajuapan was a factor in my decision to work there. Diquiyú is about an hour away, compared with the four grueling hours it takes to get to the village of San Juan Mixtepec, and another hour to each of the agencias.

THE SETTING

San Juan Diquiyú is an agencia in the municipio of Tezoatlán de Segura y Luna. Compared to the village of San Juan Mixtepec, the town of Tezoatlán is larger (with a population of 2,375 versus Mixtepec's 1,806), it has a bank where remittance checks can be cashed, it is on a paved road, and most of its streets are paved.

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There are land telephone lines, although there is no bus service. There are of course the ubiquitous "suburbans," which are more expensive than buses but better than walking. In general, one might say that Tezoatlán is more modern than Mixtepec. Another way to describe it would be that it is more Mestizo. The town looks more like other towns in Mexico. The census, which identifies indigenous people as those who speak an indigenous language, would characterize Tezoatlán as Mestizo: only 3 percent of the residents speak Mixteco. By contrast, in San Juan Mixtepec, 93 percent speak Mixteco.

THE VILLAGE OF SAN JUAN DIQUIYÚ

Compared with the road to San Juan Mixtepec, the way to San Juan Diquiyú is like a superhighway. Although Diquiyú is within what I call the great unpaved region, the road is paved until Tezoatlán. After that the terrain becomes more rugged and the road more serpentine. Diquiyú itself is as its name describes it: on a rock (or maybe more like an inverted cone). Like most communities in the region, the village is as vertical as it is horizontal. Most streets go up and down the rock, with cross streets at a tilt. The Catholic church, the ayuntamiento, and the community basketball court/dance floor occupy the only flat spaces. Even these are somewhat uneven: the basketball court is below the agencia offices; the two are connected by cement stairs. The offices are lower in elevation than the church.

There is a lower percentage of Mixteco speakers in San Juan Diquiyú than in the Mixtepec villages (see tables 3.3, 3.4 and 4.1), but they still make up a majority of the population; the census would categorize the community as indigenous. However, I noticed that few of the children in Diquiyú speak Mixteco. Some may be able to, but they prefer to speak Spanish. They say they understand Mixteco but they do not speak it. By contrast, the great majority of children in Yososcuá and San Lucas speak Mixteco.

Unlike Mixtepec, the agencia of San Juan Diquiyú does not have a large pine forest. The dominant vegetation is scrub and some very small palm trees. The trees are small because the leaves are cut for use in making *palma*, the woven baskets and hats available in Oaxaca City markets. For some people in Diquiyú, palma is their only source of money. The price paid for one hat, which takes about one-third of a day to make, is one peso (US10 cents).

On the other hand, the terrain around Diquiyú is more amenable to agriculture than that around the Mixtepec agencias, as there are rolling hills with small parcels of land suitable for growing corn and beans. The land is less eroded than that of Mixtepec and affords more pasturage for horses, cattle, goats, and sheep. The vegetation surrounding the village is dense enough to provide firewood, the source

Table 4.1. Language and religion: San Juan Diquiyú

Population over 5 years old	681	
Mixteco only	25	4%
Mixteco and Spanish	419	62%
Spanish only	237	34%
Catholic	627	92%
Non-Catholic	53	8%

Source: INEGI 2000.

of most of the heating done in the village. As in Mixtepec, it is illegal to cut green wood, but dried or dead branches may be taken. Ninety-one percent of the households in the village use wood for cooking.

One day as I was driving to Diquiyú, I saw two elderly women emerge from the brush carrying large bundles of firewood on their backs. Sweat was streaming down their faces and bodies. I naturally offered them a ride to the village. I tried to lift one of the bundles of wood into the bed of my pickup truck, but I could not budge it. It must have weighed over fifty pounds. The women easily lifted the bundles into the truck. As we drove to the village, I asked how long that wood would last in their households. Three days. To buy that amount of wood would cost 50 pesos (US$5), or the equivalent of fifty straw hats. Most people gathered their own wood, as it was "free." That is, money was not required to obtain it. The sweat is not counted as a cost.

There are men in the village who gather firewood using burros to carry it; they can get more than three days' worth. But many of these men sell firewood to other members of the village. There are also men with pickup trucks, generally purchased in the United States. They can gather the most wood at a time; in some cases, these men sell the wood in other communities. Some residents complain that the men with the trucks take all the available wood, leaving none for the burros and the humans to carry. As with many aspects of life in the village, those who have migrated are more prosperous than those who have not. The migrants tend to be the people with pickup trucks. Here is another example of selective modernity: a majority of the people in the village cook with wood, but some of them collect the wood using modern pickup trucks.

In 2002 the Mexican government established a "*tres por uno*" program, three for one. This development program is intended to help emigrants to invest in their own communities. In this program, officially, the state government and the federal government together provide 50 percent of the funds for these projects. The rest of the funds are provided by the migrants and the village. In reality, the municipal

government contributes expertise—advice on how to construct drains, for example—and information on how to navigate the Mexican bureaucracy. The people in the village provide the labor, through tequio, and the migrants provide the money.

Migrants remain in touch with one another and with the autoridades in the village. Cell phones are essential to this. According to the agente, every year the autoridades call the migrants and tell them what project the community has decided on, and how much money it will cost. Then the migrants, including the non-Catholics, send the money. This pattern is common throughout the Mixteca region, without need of any national program. One such project was under way in San Juan Diquiyú in 2004: providing a drainage and sewer system that residents could hook up to and thus have indoor plumbing, a luxury they had not had before. Over a period of several months, every street in the village had a trench dug into its center. Then, enormous concrete pipes were piled up in the middle of the village. Eventually, these pipes were installed in the trenches by members of the village. Although some returned migrants have a little knowledge about construction, having worked in construction in the United States, the village residents depended on advice and expertise from officials in the government in Tezoatlán. The drainage project was only the most recent of a series of projects funded by the migrants and installed by the people in the village. These include fixing up the cemetery, installing a new basketball court/dance floor in the village center, and providing drinking water to all the houses in the village. These are impressive contributions to the community as a whole, and residents are happy to point them out.

THE FIESTA SYSTEM

The fiesta system in Diquiyú is much the same as it has been for many years, with some exceptions. The traditional system featured two major fiestas (San Juan Bautista, June 24, and San Juan Degollado, August 29), as well as a smaller fiesta, for Nuestro Señor de Chalma, on the first Friday of Lent. In the past, there were mayordomos for each of the fiestas, and now there is one mayordomo for all three. However, the system is virtually intact. There are thirty-six *socios*, twelve for each fiesta. These are men and their families who contribute time, labor, and money to the fiesta. When so many are willing to participate, the cost is much less for each family. In 2004 the amount of cash required from each socio was about $400 dollars. In several cases, the 2004 fiestas were sponsored in part by village members who live in the United States. Instead of rejecting the fiesta system, these migrants are interested in maintaining it. So, the weakening of the fiesta system is much less visible in Diquiyú than in the Mixtepec villages. Being mayordomo is not a terrible onus to bear, or, as it seemed to me in the Mixtepec villages, an example of a dying tradition.

Table 4.2. Socioeconomic indicators: San Juan Diquiyú

Inhabited houses	161	
Using gas to cook	15	9%
Using wood to cook	146	91%
With indoor toilet	115	71%
With indoor water	149	92%
With drainage	0	0%
With electricity	156	97%
With no water, drainage, or electricity	2	1%
Marginalization level	high	

Source: INEGI 2000.

On the other hand, migration has had some clear effects on the Diquiyú fiestas. There are still fireworks (essential for every important event in Mexico except those sponsored by non-Catholics), a dance, and a *jaripeo*—competitive bull riding. But nowadays the bull riders have to be hired by the fiesta sponsors because there are not enough young men living in the village or returning for the fiestas to ride the bulls. This is also true of the *matachines*, people dressed in costumes with large masks, who participate in the processions and dance at the fiesta. Still, there is clearly an effort to maintain the system as it has been. The members of San Juan Diquiyú are using money from migrants to keep the traditional fiesta system to the extent possible.

ORTHODOX AND FOLK CATHOLICISM

The Catholic pastor of Tezoatlán has organized a group of catechists (all women) in San Juan Diquiyú. This is part of the response to the increase in the number of non-Catholics in Latin America generally, and to the shortage of priests. It is part of the campaign to make folk Catholics more orthodox. Catechists receive special training from the parish priests in the meanings of various Catholic rituals, in Catholic beliefs, and in how to answer questions raised by non-Catholics. There are catechist groups in several villages in the municipio of Tezoatlán. They have their own meetings in the *cofradías*—the buildings used during the fiestas—and their own celebrations. The catechists are part of a lay ministry that could take up some of the tasks that priests did in the past. In addition, catechists and priests are trying to enforce the rules of the church regarding the sacraments. For example, couples who want

to be married by a priest must prove that they have been baptized, have received first communion, and have been confirmed, before the marriage can take place. The church also wants to convince the villagers that God is more important than the saints, including the patron saint of their village.

The catechists are tasked to convince the other Catholics in their villages of the correctness of these rules. However, the persistence of the fiesta system in Diquiyú suggests that they have not been very successful. The folk Catholics seem to be holding their own. It is highly unlikely that even large numbers of catechists will convince villagers that the patron saint is not the central ritual figure. After all, San Juan (Saint John) sends the rain, it is believed. God is not taken into consideration in the celebrations of the villagers at the fiestas. Ironically, the Orthodox Catholic Church and the non-Catholics agree on the importance of God over the saints, but the similarity stops there. The Catholics still believe in the saints, while the non-Catholics do not. There is no strict line between orthodox and folk Catholics. While most fiesta participants are not catechists, some catechists participate in some parts of the fiesta. Here, as in much of Latin America, the traditions of folk and orthodox Catholics overlap. The fact that there are catechists in Diquiyú suggests some movement toward orthodox behavior, but the robustness of the fiesta system calls that possibility into question.

NON-CATHOLICS IN SAN JUAN DIQUIYÚ

Like the rate of out-migration, the percentage of non-Catholics in Diquiyú is also lower than in the Mixtepec villages: 8 percent, as opposed to San Lucas, with 40 percent, and Yososcuá, with 25 percent (see tables 3.2, 3.3, and 4.1). When the first non-Catholics arrived in the village, many Catholics denounced them, saying they were crazy, and trying to punish them or force them to return to sanity (i.e., Catholicism). Alternatively, the Catholics made fun of the non-Catholics. The element of ridicule of non-Catholics is very present in the village. Many non-Catholics pointed out that the Catholics ridicule their beliefs, and embarrass them in front of their own families. Often it is the families who make fun of them. This is given as a reason for the low number of non-Catholics in the village. According to the Catholics and the non-Catholics alike, the latter either leave or remain outside the village because they do not want to be ridiculed. This may account at least in part for the small numbers of non-Catholics in the village.

In 2004 Catholics in Diquiyú criticized the non-Catholics by saying that the hermanos do not contribute to the community, they refuse to pay for repairs of the community basketball court/dance floor, they do not do tequio, and so on. But according to the political leaders of the village, it is only the activities associated with

the fiesta, such as bull-riding or dancing, that the hermanos will not pay for. One man said that when he was agente, in 1994, the non-Catholics threatened him with bodily harm if the Catholics insisted on forcing them to take on religious cargos. The two groups did not in fact resort to violence to settle the matter. Nonetheless, there was definitely hostility between the Catholics and the non-Catholics at that time. This event was part of the conflict that followed the conversion of the first non-Catholics. By 2004, the village had agreed to let non-Catholics have only secular cargos. Still, people ask why they won't pay for fireworks or the carnival rides, which are not strictly Catholic. The non-Catholics see these activities as frivolous and a waste of money.

There are two congregations of non-Catholics in Diquiyú: the Seventh-day Adventists and the Trinitarian church, a mission of the Centros Bíblicos in Huajuapan.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

In Diquiyú, the Adventist presence began when a resident of another village, part of the agencia of Diquiyú, converted two brothers who eventually moved to the village of Diquiyú, where they live now. This first conversion occurred in about 1981. This date is earlier than the arrival of non-Catholics to the Mixtepec villages. (The earlier converts tended to bear the brunt of Catholic rejection.) The siblings of the first converts, and their wives and families, all converted to the Seventh-day Adventist church. At first, the Catholics of the village criticized the Adventists. "Nos odiaban" (they hated us), according to one member. They forced one of the converts to be a socio of the mayordomo. This man clearly succumbed to the pressure from the majority in order to keep the peace and so that all the Adventists could remain members of the village. By 2004, the attitudes of the Catholics had changed. "Ya no dicen nada" (they don't say anything any more), an Adventist woman said. The village as a whole has agreed to give the non-Catholics non-Catholic cargos, such as the school committee, the water committee, etc. The non-Catholics have to take up more of these cargos in order to compensate for their absence from the Catholic committees. The Catholics are clearly not happy with the arrangement, but have accepted it. This is perhaps because the non-Catholics do not proselytize and generally keep their heads down.

Although emigration from the Mixteca began in the 1980s, the Adventists never migrated out of San Juan Diquiyú. In addition, as an extended family whose members did not migrate, they have no relatives who migrated, thus they have no access to help from relatives in the form of remittances or gifts. And unlike other Adventist congregations in the region, they never succeeded in converting their neighbors.

As a result of this, there have been no new members. Today, the membership consists of the extended families of the original converts. These families are among the poorest in the village. They are among the people who make palma. Their houses are small, one- or two-room shacks made of wood, with dirt floors and no modern amenities such as refrigerators or televisions. These contrast with the houses of returning migrants or the relatives of migrants in the United States. Those houses are made of cement, and some have cement floors. Many have large televisions as well as other consumer goods such as sound systems, video recorders, and the like.

This case contradicts the general pattern of migration and conversion. The Adventists converted earlier than most, they never migrated to anyplace outside the agencia, and they are poorer than most people in the village. This exception tends to prove the rule, however. If conversion is associated with migration, and migration is associated with an increase in wealth, it is not a surprise that these converts are poor. They have never seen the enormous numbers and variety of consumer goods available to migrants in the United States, and even if they saw them they would not be able to afford them. They never made any converts outside the extended family; this is highly unusual and has a predictable outcome. The fact that they did not migrate, along with their lack of interest in converting others, points up the opposite pattern in other groups.

All Adventists are not like those in Diquiyú. In the village of Santiago Asunción, in the Silacayoápam District, the process of migration and conversion was similar to that of other communities. The first convert, Arnulfo Solano, had migrated to the United States in 1990 and had been converted by his brothers, who were already members of the church. He returned to the village in 1992, determined to found a church there. He had convinced a few Anglo-American Adventists to accompany him to the village to help with the evangelization project. In addition, his uncle was the agente and might be persuaded to support the new church. This plan did not work, and there was great opposition to the group, especially to the building of an Adventist church in the village. Arnulfo and the others were so successful in making converts that they eventually convinced the government authorities in Silacayoápam and Huajuapan to support them. With letters from both, the Adventists finally were allowed to build the church. This church building is one of the largest non-Catholic churches in the entire Mixteca region. It is also very prominently located on the road through the village, while the Catholic church occupies the traditional space across from the government buildings. Today the majority of the villagers and most of the autoridades are Adventists. The fiesta system has become less important. There are only two fiestas in comparison with the pre-Adventist number, seven.[1] In addition, attendance at fiestas has declined.

This story contrasts sharply with that of Diquiyú while following closely the pattern of other communities. A crucial difference between Santiago Asunción and San Juan Diquiyú was the outside support from other Adventists and from municipal and district authorities. Without this, and without more converts in the village itself, Santiago Asunción may well have had a similar history to Diquiyú's.

TRINITARIANS IN SAN JUAN DIQUIYÚ

The other non-Catholic group in San Juan Diquiyú is a mission of the Centros Bíblicos in Huajuapan. This is a Trinitarian church, and most of its members have been migrants. According to the pastor of the congregation in 2004, two families of non-Catholics first returned to Diquiyú in 1984. They were members of the village and had converted to Pentecostalism during the time they were migrants. Once in Diquiyú, they began to evangelize; they later returned to the migrant stream. In 2004, there were fifty to sixty members of the church in Diquiyú; about half were in the United States. According to this pastor, the relations between this congregation and the Catholics in the village were friendly. He said, "we are different, but there are no arguments." This is the attitude of most of the members of the Pentecostal church in Diquiyú.

The pastor of the main congregation in Huajuapan wanted the Diquiyú members to do a better job of evangelization so that more souls would be saved. In one homily, he asked; "Who are the saints? For the world [(i.e., Catholics)], the saints are images [(i.e., statues of saints)]. But for God *we* (the hermanos) are the saints. As in the hymn 'When the Saints Go Marching In,' we will be among the saints. We are going to fly, and the Catholics will be left behind." On another occasion, he prayed for an *avivamiento*, an awakening, in the village to inspire people to convert. During the fiesta of San Juan, the patron saint of the village, he criticized the Catholics harshly, saying that there was a weight bearing down on the village. Then he said that San Juan is the devil, the prince of darkness. He encouraged the hermanos to work harder to bring people into the light so that they would be saved. He recommended that the hermanos greet everyone, not just hermanos, by saying God bless you (the standard greeting of all Evangelicals). The implication was that such friendliness might lead to an invitation to a service, which might lead to another hermano in the village. However, in a village of 700 souls, it is likely that everyone knows who the hermanos are and would reject such an offer of friendship, knowing the reason behind it. The church members in the village are not willing to proselytize, but the pastor from Huajuapan is trying to get them to do so. I believe they want to preserve the peace.

CONFLICT, PEACE, AND RIDICULE

San Juan Diquiyú seems to be a village whose members are trying to get along despite religious differences. One of the reasons for a lack of conflict over religion is the quiescence of the non-Catholics. Neither group has made many efforts to convert their fellow villagers. Although the Centros Bíblicos group has grown, its growth rate is quite a lot lower than those of the Mixtepec agencias or other communities such as Santiago Asunción. As long as the non-Catholics remain a small minority of the population (at 8 percent, quite a bit smaller), the Catholics seem to accept their presence and go along with adjusting the cargos so that the non-Catholics take on more secular cargos than religious ones.

However, it is in the nature of Pentecostals to spread the news broadly and loudly. This is what the Centros Bíblicos leaders are trying to encourage not only in Diquiyú, but in other villages as well. To do this, they are trying to push the hermanos into conflict with the Catholics by saying that their saint is the devil. It is doubtful that any non-Catholic resident of the village would make such a statement in public because they are not willing to create the kind of conflict that has gotten non-Catholics expelled from other villages. On the other hand, Catholics are not averse to an occasional remark making fun of the hermanos or asserting to outsiders that the hermanos do not participate in the activities of the village. The comment by one Pentecostal speaker from outside the village that he feels great when people make fun of him was aimed at convincing the hermanos to proselytize, even if they are ridiculed—they will grow to like it.

The topic of ridicule by Catholics came up during my interview with Hermano Jacinto, the pastor of the Diquiyú Trinitarians. The context was a discussion of where people are baptized into another denomination. It seemed to me that, generally, Mixtecs go through a fairly long process that sometimes results in baptism. I had assumed that most are baptized outside the village, in the migrant population. However, Hermano Jacinto said that it is best to be baptized in the village, because then the individual already knows that he or she will be ridiculed. Those who are baptized elsewhere are not prepared for the invective that might greet them when they return to the community. Hermano Jacinto said that just about all of the non-Catholics in his congregation had heard about Jesus during their migrations away from the region. However, he encourages prospective converts not to be baptized elsewhere. He told me that a convert baptized in the United States is like a plant that you might bring back from the US: you hope it will thrive, but it may not. As such plants often are unable to adjust to life in the Mixteca, so people baptized in the United States are often unable to maintain their faith in the face of the ridicule of their friends and family.

According to the pastor, some of these people return to the Catholic Church, or else "no son nada" (they are nothing, of no religion). Many other villagers, Catholic and non-Catholic, said this is a pattern in Diquiyú. This may partially explain the low number of non-Catholics. Although the 2000 census found no completely secular residents, I know of at least one family who is. This is the trajectory I found in my earlier research in Sonora: rather than returning to the Catholic Church, non-Catholics simply become secular and stop attending any church. I did not find any people who returned to Catholicism after converting. However, both Hermano Jacinto and a member of the Adventists in Diquiyú said that there were converts who went back to being Catholics. Perhaps this is because "being Catholic" is more than simply belonging to a church; it means accepting the rules of the village, which include the entire fiesta system as well as the support of the Catholics rather than their ridicule.

DISCUSSION

Why are there fewer non-Catholics in Diquiyú than in the Mixtepec villages? One factor, and an important one, is the lower emigration rate for the municipio as a whole. As it is importantly return migrants who belong to non-Catholic churches, lower rates of emigration and return migration have resulted in there being fewer non-Catholics. However, the role of ridicule seems to be a much bigger issue in Diquiyú than in any of the other communities.

The combination of these factors has, in turn, had several consequences in Diquiyú. First, the fiesta system is much more intact than in the Mixtepec villages. Furthermore, money from remittances helps pay for people from outside the village to take on fiesta roles for which no one in the village qualifies. Thus, money earned by emigrants is being used to maintain the fiesta system. Another factor is the history of religious conflict in Diquiyú. Both of the non-Catholic churches were founded in the early 1980s. This was a period when expulsion of non-Catholics was a real possibility; it is when the expulsions of the congregations that today form the Centros Bíblicos in Huajuapan took place. In Diquiyú, the Catholics forced at least one non-Catholic to participate in an expensive, complex role in the Catholic fiesta during this period. There was also the incident in 1994, when the non-Catholics were driven to threaten the mayordomo with physical violence if he tried to force them to participate in the Catholic part of the fiesta. This shows that a level of conflict lasted at least into the 1990s. At the same time, the ridicule of the non-Catholics by the Catholics is evidently an important reason for some converts to return to the Catholic Church, while some become completely secular and others remain outside the village. Evidently, the combination of all these factors has

made the non-Catholics reluctant to proselytize in the village. The lack of conflict in 2004 thus derives at least in part from the inaction of the non-Catholics.

It might be suggested that the village is less modern than the Mixtepec agencias. It certainly adheres more to the traditional fiestas than the other communities. The paucity of return migrants also corresponds to lower numbers of modern vehicles and consumer goods. However, in Diquiyú there is another approach to modernity. The members of this village take on development projects paid for by the entire community. While all villages in the Mixteca depend on remittances to maintain their infrastructures to some extent, in Diquiyú the community as a whole contributes to development projects such as providing potable water and indoor plumbing to all members of the village. Even the poorest villagers received both these products of modernity. The community's subsequent development plan was to pave the streets of the village. This level of commitment to the community as a whole is not seen in the Mixtepec villages. Yet it has resulted in modern facilities in Diquiyú that are available only to a minority of members of the Mixtepec villages. There are clearly more ways of becoming modern than converting to non-Catholic churches. In Diquiyú, the migrants help pay for the maintenance of the non-modern fiestas, and they help develop and maintain the community as a whole. Thus, selective modernity—potable water, indoor plumbing—is provided from within the traditional system of usos y costumbres.

NOTE

1. The information on the Adventists of Santiago Asunción comes from Espinosa Hernández 2003:63–70.

5

Colonia Sinaí

Los Expulsados

INTRODUCTION

Along one of the winding, hilly roads leading out of Huajuapan de León, there appears a small sign saying "Colonia Sinaí." The Colonia Sinaí was built by Mixtec Pentecostals who were expelled from their village, San Antonio Yodonduza Monteverde, in 1987. I learned of this community in 2003 from Hermano Heriberto of the Centros Bíblicos, the organization that has helped relocate three different groups of people expelled from their villages. I knew that many expulsions of this type had occurred in Chiapas (Cantón Delgado 1997), and some in Oaxaca (Montes García 1999; Marroquín 1996), and now I saw an opportunity to learn about one of the expelled communities in the Mixteca.

It is clear that the Centros Bíblicos have been instrumental in the formation of the communities of the expelled in the Distrito of Huajuapan. In the three cases where the Centros intervened, the expelled hermanos have constructed new, cohesive communities on land on the outskirts of the city. In each case, the Centros helped the hermanos buy land on the installment plan, offered advice in construction and other tasks, and generally provided moral support. Colonia Sinaí is one of these groups of *expulsados* (expelled ones).

THE VILLAGE

Like the communities described in chapters 3 and 4, San Antonio was 100 percent Catholic until migrants who had converted to non-Catholic religions began

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returning. The first convert returned in 1980. Hermano Alberto had converted in Mexico City, where he had gone to find work in the late 1970s. He was one of the earliest Mixtec converts, or at least of those who returned to their villages. Mixtecs who migrated before 1980 mainly went to Veracruz and Mexico City rather than to northern Mexico. In the Mixteca in 1980, non-Catholics were very rare, and most villagers had never left their municipios. Very few, if any, of the people of San Antonio had ever heard of other religions besides Catholicism. There had been almost no returning converts in the entire region up to that time.

As soon as he returned to San Antonio, Hermano Alberto began spreading the gospel, and villagers began listening. Hermano Alberto's appearance in the village was something very new, and potentially disruptive. Soon, more migrants returned from different parts of Mexico and the United States. Some had converted to other religions. They joined together and began holding services in Hermano Alberto's home. In 1987 the accumulated non-Catholics built a church out of sheets of oil-infused cardboard. By then there were fifteen families of converts.

The villagers were shocked by Hermano Alberto's proclamations. They were outraged at his denunciation of the community's saints. They realized that his views represented a threat to their way of life. The interest that some villagers showed in Hermano Alberto's message was also a surprise to the majority. They worried about the growing number of converts in the village. The hermanos offered to take on more nonreligious cargos instead, but the Catholic majority refused to consider this compromise. The offers of the hermanos did nothing to eliminate the threat of the collapse of the entire way of life of the village. The social process is one that includes both the religious and the nonreligious aspects of the community, and the fiesta expresses the culmination of the year's events, religious and otherwise.

The leaders said that those members of the community who did not want to participate in the life of the community had no right to expect the privileges of community membership. There were arguments among the villagers over who had rights to water, electricity, etc. There was a high level of animosity between Catholics and non-Catholics.

THE EXPULSION

In February of 1987, the Catholics began to speak of forcing the hermanos to leave. Rumors spread, and tension grew. One Sunday, the Catholics acted. According to one of the members of Colonia Sinaí, "se levantaron la gente" (the people rose up). There were 130 households against the fifteen convert households: "con palos, machetes, salieron, amenazándonos" (they came out with sticks, machetes, threatening us). In one account, some of the Catholics had firearms and shot out the tires

of a vehicle owned by a missionary from the United States who was trying to help the hermanos. The Catholics drove the non-Catholics from the village and would not let them return. Those who tried were put in the village jail and expelled again. According to a resident of Sinaí, the Catholics said "hasta el raíz los vamos a sacar" (we are going to get them out by the root).

The hermanos were not allowed to take any of their possessions. Their animals and land were taken over by their relatives, who were among those who had expelled them. Their houses were looted, and then allowed to fall into ruin. None of the hermanos returned for many years.

AFTER THE EXPULSION

At the time of the expulsion from San Antonio, there was only one Centro Bíblico in Huajuapan. The members of this group were predominantly villagers who had been expelled from another community. One of these loaned a house to the San Antonio non-Catholics. All 15 families were "amontonados" (piled in a heap), like goats in a pen, in the one house. They stayed there from February to June 1987. Then the Centro Bíblico bought the land that is now the Colonia Sinaí. The hermanos agreed to pay for the land over time. They subdivided the land into 10-meter-square plots and allocated a plot to each family. In this way, the communal traditions established over centuries in the village continued as the new community took shape.

At that time, there was nothing on the land or around it. It was far away from the city itself (which has since grown to meet the Colonia). The highway was dirt. Everything was "monte" (scrub land). Not even buses came by. The hermanos had to walk downtown with their propane tanks to buy gas. There was no electricity, and they depended on the ubiquitous *pipas* for water.[1] At first, there was only one cistern for everyone in the colonia. Each family was allotted two buckets of water per day. Here we see the continuation of the communal ethos established by village customs: everyone had equal access to the water. In 1991 the colonia got electricity, and in 1995 it was connected to the municipal water system. After this point, the community no longer controlled these utilities, and each household is now responsible for its own bills. A step away from community and toward modernity.

During this period, the hermanos learned how to construct buildings by building their own houses. The first houses were crude, made of cardboard or *carrizo*, a reed that grows plentifully in the area. Slowly, and with help from the original Centro Bíblico, the colonia began to take shape. Today, it consists of a circle of houses, with the church as a node in the circle. The church is situated on the street that is the entrance to the colonia. Next to and across from the church are the homes of the original non-Catholics, including Hermano Alberto and his family. There is also a

store across from the church. In the space defined by the church, the houses of the leaders, and the store, many communal activities take place. This area could be seen as the central plaza of the community, although for outsiders it is simply a section of a dirt street.

Most of the houses are made of concrete, with concrete floors. This contrasts with houses in the three villages of chapters 3 and 4, where concrete houses, the most expensive to build, tend to be in the minority. The hermanos maintain their own separate space, defined by the church and the houses, their own language, and their own social system. They contribute tequio and volunteer for various other community committees. They call each other "hermano" and "hermana," brother and sister. They work communally on the church building, which must constantly be expanded to fit the increasing number of members. It is a very cohesive community.

Since 1987 the number of families of hermanos in the colonia has grown from the original 15 to 35. Some of this growth is internal, as the children of the original settlers marry and start their own households. Other, more recent members of the community are converts from San Antonio Yodonduza Monteverde, the village that expelled the hermanos; still others are from Llano Grande, a village near San Antonio. All the hermanos in the colonia speak Mixteco; the fact that they all originated in the same municipio means that they all speak a mutually understandable version of the language. The children born into the colonia grow up speaking both Mixteco and Spanish (see table 5.1). It is interesting to note that 91 percent of the adults are bilingual, in contrast to the municipio of Huajuapan as a whole, which is 7 percent bilingual (INEGI 2000). There has clearly been a concerted effort to preserve the Mixteco language, while encouraging everyone to learn Spanish.

The cohesiveness of the colonia is similar to that of a small pueblo, with the added advantage of the residents actually having originated in a small pueblo. But the present-day solidarity of the colonia is perhaps most similar to the villages as they were before the beginning of religious change in the Mixteca. Those villages were 100 percent Catholic; the colonia is 100 percent non-Catholic, and all are members of the same church. The inhabitants of those villages were in agreement regarding religious as well as social traditions, and this is what constructed the *tejido comunal* (the communal weaving)—that today is perceived as having been torn in two by religious dissidents. In the colonia, those dissidents are now constructing a tejido comunal of their own, more closely woven together than those of the villages that have experienced religious disagreements. The small size of the community—fewer than fifty households—is an additional factor in the cohesiveness of the colonia.

Although the first convert was a returned migrant, and although many migrated in past years, today few hermanos leave the colonia looking for work. This is because they have hopes of finding and keeping work in Huajuapan. The pastor

Table 5.1. Language and religion: Colonia Sinaí

Population over 5 years old	54	
Mixteco only	5	9%
Mixteco and Spanish	49	91%
Spanish only	0	0%
Catholic	0	0%
Non-Catholic	54	100%

of the church in the colonia said, "It's sad to be far from our family—it's not right." This is a view that only those with economic stability can enjoy. In the Colonia Sinaí, economic stability comes from living in the city, where more jobs are available. However, employers commonly view Evangelicals as good workers who arrive on the job on time and are very honest. At the same time, networks of converts provide information about jobs and recommendations of prospective employees: if one Pentecostal is a good employee, this person's recommendation will help another get a job. In fact, there are Catholics who complain that the hermanos are a "mafia" because they are very cohesive and only help each other.

In 2004 I conducted a survey of twenty-three of the thirty-five households in the colonia. I was assisted by the granddaughter of Hermano Alberto; she is fluent in both languages and works as a seamstress in the colonia. The information from that survey is the basis for table 5.1. One of the results of the survey is that 61 percent of those in the survey are employed. In San Lucas, Yososcuá, and San Juan Diquiyú, the figures are 26 percent, 33 percent, and 16 percent, respectively.

There are several reasons why the colonia is so much wealthier than the other communities in the study. One very important one is that the hermanos do not spend money on fiestas, alcohol, or other activities seen as frivolous. Another is that there is a construction boom in Huajaupan, fueled by migrant remittances and returning migrants who want to build bigger and better houses with the money they have saved. The coincidence of learning how to build houses while building their own and the church has allowed the hermanos to take advantage of the employment available for construction workers: 39 percent of those surveyed are employed in construction.

THE RETURN TO THE VILLAGE

In the period between 1987 and 1999, certain legal changes were made at the level of the national government; these had important repercussions in the villages of the Mixteca. There were also political changes in the Municipio of San Antonio

Monteverde, where the Sinaí hermanos originated. In January of 1992, the national constitution was modified to state that "the Mexican nation has a pluricultural composition" and that the law will protect "specific forms of social organization," among other indigenous cultural traditions. Indigenous communities have taken this to mean that they have the right to defend their right to exist as a collective group. In the Mixteca, this has been interpreted as the right to expel those who do not participate in the specific form of social organization known as usos y costumbres. In 1998 the Oaxaca state constitution was changed, and language similar to the federal laws was added (Diario Oficial del Estado de Oaxaca 1998:519–26).

In July of 1992, the national Law of Religious Associations was approved. This sweeping change in national policy on religion included a statement that every individual has the right to practice his or her own religious belief and shall not be discriminated against or receive hostile treatment because of it. Importantly, the law holds that "the person shall not be obliged to give personal service or contribute money to the upkeep of a church or religious association, nor shall any person be forced to participate in rituals, ceremonies, religious feasts or acts." This law, in the context of indigenous communities that practice usos y costumbres, is completely at odds with the constitutional guarantee of indigenous traditions.[2]

It was during the course of these legal changes that residents of Colonia Sinaí returned to their village. In 1999, two people went back to the village to convert people there. They believed that the law guaranteeing religious freedom to individuals gave them the right to proselytize, and gave members of the village the right to refuse to participate in the Catholic aspects of the usos y costumbres system. At the same time, the village leaders believed that the changes in the constitution supported their assertion of their right to expel people who refused to participate. The stalemate was broken in 1995, when the Mexican National Commission on Human Rights declared that although the Indian communities have the right to uphold their customs, they could not use this as an excuse to violate individual rights. Thus, individual rights, an aspect of modernity, superseded the right of the traditional community to enforce its rules. When the hermanos began returning to San Antonio in 1999, the Catholics again tried to expel them, saying that the law in their village is *their* law of usos y costumbres. But the hermanos "se defendieron con la ley" (defended themselves with the law).

The national and state laws were not the only changes that were felt in the municipio of San Antonio Monteverde, however. Before 1999 the presidente municipal was in favor of the expulsions. After 1999 the new presidente was neutral on the subject. Thus, as in Chiapas (Garma Navarro 2002; Cantón Delgado 1997), the expulsions were not entirely based on religion, nor has the change in attitude on the part of the municipio leadership been predominantly religious. Rather, both

national and local level legal and political changes have made for a compromise. The traditional system continues to some extent in San Antonio, but hermanos are only required to take on cargos associated with the government, not the church. Now, there are village leaders that are members of the Centros Bíblicos, the church of the residents of Colonia Sinaí. As of 2004, there were twenty-three families of hermanos living in the village, more than had been living there prior to the expulsion. Thus has the village, comprised of the people in Sinaí, the Catholics in the village, the non-Catholics in the village, and the people in the migrant stream, come to reconstitute itself and continue its existence as a community.

DISCUSSION

The type of conflict that ended in the expulsion of non-Catholics from San Antonio Yodonduza Monteverde is probably a thing of the past in the Mixteca. One reason for this is that the number of non-Catholics has increased tremendously since 1980, when the first convert returned to San Antonio. There are now non-Catholics in most villages, and the Catholics have had to deal with their refusals to participate in the Catholic aspects of the traditional system. In addition, large numbers of Mixtecs have migrated to areas where there are many other churches besides the Catholic Church. Thus, the existence of non-Catholics is no longer a shock. Another reason for the lack of expulsions is the changes in the legal system.

Some students of religious change in Mexico might assume that the expulsados would completely abandon the community model of the Mixtec village. Being a community entirely made up of non-Catholics, they might reject all of the traditions of the villages. However, the continuity of tequio and the (secular) cargo system gives the lie to such assumptions. As in the villages, the members of the Colonia Sinaí have picked and chosen elements of modernity that suit their lives as Mixtecs, and remained Mixtecs in the bargain. All speak Mixtec. The children speak Mixtec. All identify strongly with the village that expelled them. Most are wage earners in the city. All live in cement houses with cement floors and indoor plumbing. However, a large majority speaks Spanish as well as Mixtec. While their community in Huajuapan has many more modern amenities than most villages, the basis of their identity is still the village. Now that there are many converts in the village, it has come to be seen as a social whole. The attraction of being members of a traditional community is clearly greater than the appeal of modernity as a complete system. The ability to decide which elements of modernity to embrace gives them a great deal of freedom, and they have decided to remain indigenous in many important ways.

NOTES

1. Pipas are water tank trucks that are found all over Latin America. They deliver water by a hose from their tanks. Many people depend entirely on pipas for their water, but this water is much more expensive than water delivered through a municipal water system.

2. The section on the two legal changes at the national level, and their implications for indigenous communities, is based almost entirely on Carlos Garma Navarro's (2002:38–39) discussion.

6

Four Communities Compared

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

As the last three chapters have shown, Mixtec villages vary considerably in their acceptance of Evangelical Protestants, their continuation of the cargo system, and other aspects of their cultural systems. It could also be said that the ways that modernity is selected in each community are different from the others. At present, it probably is not possible to describe a "typical" Mixtec village. I have tried to demonstrate a certain amount of variation among the communities in my study, but this by no means exhausts the possibilities. Obviously, more field research is needed. In the meantime, it is possible to make some comments on how the communities in my study are similar and different. The one community that is quite different from the other three is Colonia Sinaí. Because of the way I conducted my research, the statistics from Sinaí are from a survey of the colonia rather than from census data. For this reason I will separate the colonia from the other communities at times during my comparisons.

THE SETTINGS

The four communities vary along a line of rural to urban. The Mixtepec villages are the most remote, a three-hour drive from the nearest town, Tlaxiaco. San Juan Diquiyú is only forty-five minutes away from the nearest town, Tezoatlán, which in turn is near the main highway. This access to modern transportation means that

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farmers can get their crops to market more easily than those in the Mixtepec villages, although the market for corn and beans is largely within the Mixtepec community. Diquiyú teenagers, if their families can afford it, can go into town to attend high school, which the Mexican government does not pay for. While there is a high school in San Juan Mixtepec, it is inferior to those in the towns and is usually full of students from San Juan itself. Neither San Lucas nor Yososcuá has a high school. The availability of banks in the towns means that remittances are easier to access from Diquiyú than from the Mixtepec villages. Of the four communities, the Colonia Sinaí, located in the city of Huajuapan de León, has the greatest access to banks, schools, and employment.

LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

Language and religion are indicators of the extent to which the people in a Mixtec community have maintained their traditional culture. The concept of the traditional Mixtec is one who both speaks Mixteco and participates fully in the Catholic fiesta system. The ability to speak Mixteco, as well as the ability to speak Spanish, suggest the extent to which the culture is changing. The level of participation by members of a village in the Catholic aspects of the fiesta system is another indication of change or stability.

As table 6.1 demonstrates, there does not seem to be a strong correlation between speaking Mixteco and being Catholic. In fact, the percentage of Catholics (0 percent) in Colonia Sinaí is associated with a 91 percent level of bilingualism. There are no monolingual Spanish speakers there. In contrast, San Juan Diquiyú, which has the highest percentage of Catholics (92 percent), also has the highest percentage of monolingual Spanish speakers (34 percent). At the same time, San Lucas and Yososcuá, with very low percentages of Spanish monolinguals, differ considerably as to the numbers of non-Catholics. Although both Mixteco language behavior and participation in the cargo system are indications of Mixtec identity, they do not seem to be associated. In Diquiyú, the percentage of Catholics is high despite the fact that many people do not speak Mixteco, for example. Of course, there are many Catholics in Mexico who do not speak an indigenous language, but in Diquiyú being Catholic implies participating in the system of usos y costumbres, which includes the fiesta complex. Evidently it is possible to participate in the system without being able to speak Mixteco. On the other hand, the members of the Colonia Sinaí continue to identify as Mixtecs even though they do not participate in any way in the Catholic fiesta system. In fact, one of the conclusions to be drawn here is that participation in the fiesta system is not a necessary part of Mixtec identity. Not only do the non-Catholic members of Sinaí continue to be

Table 6.1. Language and religion in four communities

	San Lucas	*San Pedro Yososcuá*	*San Juan Diquiyú*	*Colonia Sinaí*
Mixteco only	30%	44%	4%	9%
Mixteco and Spanish	70%	53%	62%	91%
Spanish only	0%	3%	34%	0%
Catholic	59%	75%	92%	0%
Non-Catholic	40%	25%	8%	100%

Source: INEGI 2000; survey by author.

Mixtec, the non-Catholic members of the other communities in the study also see themselves as Mixtec.

SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITIES

In the case of socioeconomic variables, it is possible to compare only the three rural villages, as I did not collect the same kinds of data on Sinaí as those provided by the census. In table 6.2, there is clearly a similarity between San Lucas and San Juan Diquiyú. A majority of households in both villages have indoor toilets, indoor water, and electricity. A tiny minority is without all the indicators of prosperity.

However, Diquiyú has the greatest percentage of Catholics, while (again, leaving out Sinaí) San Lucas has the highest percentage of non-Catholics. Yososcuá is distinctly poorer than the other two villages, yet it has a greater percentage of non-Catholics than Diquiyú. Although I do not have statistics for Sinaí, in general, the colonia has more modern facilities than the rural villages. All have indoor water, electricity, and drainage. While there are still people who cook with wood in Sinaí, wood is not as easy to come by in the city as in the countryside, and Sinaí residents do not have the right to collect wood; it must be purchased. So, Sinaí has the highest level of socioeconomic prosperity, the highest percentage of non-Catholics, and the highest percentage of bilingual speakers.

What are we to make of these data? While one might posit that Mixteco speakers would be less modern than monolingual Spanish speakers, in fact, this is not true. Being Catholic is associated with maintaining tradition, yet the largest number of people who do not speak Mixteco are in Diquiyú, the village with the highest percentage of Catholics and the most intact fiesta system. If wealth is an indicator of a willingness to accept Evangelical Protestantism, then Yososcuá should have a very high percentage of Catholics, as it is very poor. However, it has a higher percentage of non-Catholics than Diquiyú, which is comparable to

Table 6.2. Households in three communities

	San Lucas	*San Pedro Yososcuá*	*San Juan Diquiyú*
Using gas to cook	11%	0%	9%
Using wood to cook	89%	100%	91%
With indoor toilet	61%	31%	71%
With indoor water	89%	55%	92%
With drainage	6%	3%	0%
With electricity	96%	81%	97%
With no water, drainage, or electricity	0%	14%	1%
Marginalization level	high	very high	high

Source: INEGI 2000.

Table 6.3. Migration in two municipios

	Municipio	
	San Juan Mixtepec	*Tezoatlán de Segura y Luna*
Number of households	1,924	2,669
Households that receive remittances	19.75%	11.39%
Households with emigrants in the US	21.36%	13.34%
Households with circular migrants	2.29%	0.94%
Households with return migrants	12.68%	1.99%
Index of migratory intensity	3.24	0.61
Degree of migratory intensity	very high	medium

Source: INEGI 2000.

San Lucas in terms of modern facilities. Clearly the explanation for these patterns lies elsewhere.

MIGRATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Table 6.3, on migration and remittances, has information not found in tables in earlier chapters. These are data on emigration, return migration, and remittances. As this information is only available at the level of the municipio, it is not possible to know exactly what the figures are for each agencia, but the differences between Mixtepec and Tezoatlán are impressive. Clearly, the experience of migration must

be taken into account in order to understand the differences in language, religion and socioeconomic indicators among these communities. I believe that the statistics that are so difficult to explain in their own terms can be understood when the data on migration are taken into consideration.

In Tezoatlán, the level of emigration is lower than that in Mixtepec. Even more important is the difference in return and circular migration between the two municipios. In Mixtepec, the percentage of households with circular migrants is more than twice as high as in Tezoatlán. The percentage of households with return migrants is six times higher in Mixtepec than in Tezoatlán. This explains at least in part the lower number of non-Catholics in San Juan Diquiyú: evidently the non-Catholics do not return to the village. Perhaps knowing the level of ridicule they face if they do, they stay in the migrant stream. The percentage of households that receive remittances is also lower in Tezoatlán; this goes along with the lower level of emigration. However, in Diquiyú some remittances go to the community as whole in addition to specific households. The annual community project is funded by migrants—both Catholic and non-Catholic—and implemented by the members of the village for the benefit of the entire community. This focus on the community is part of traditional Mixtec village culture, although in this case the community is in charge of investing in modern facilities.

In San Lucas, it seems that the community is less forthcoming. As the people of the village themselves say, "we are no longer united." This is because there are many non-Catholics in the village. There are also few community-level improvements, while individual households vary in their possession of such items as indoor water and drainage. This variation can be explained by migration: households with emigrants and return migrants tend to have more money to spend on such amenities. But in Diquiyú, the great majority of the households have indoor water because it was provided to the community as a whole by the money of emigrants in the migrant stream and the labor of community members. The same is true of drainage. Although the figures for Diquiyú show that no households have drainage, all the households received drainage in 2004 because there was a community-level project to provide it.

What can explain this difference in the ways that such symbols of modernity are distributed? The percentage of non-Catholics in San Lucas is much higher than in Diquiyú. This is a product of emigration and return migration. The people of San Lucas have made peace over the refusal of the non-Catholics to participate in the Catholic aspects of usos y costumbres, but the community is still divided over the issue of religion. This has made cooperation in the provisioning of modern facilities less likely than in Diquiyú, where the percentage of Catholics is much higher and the level of conflict over religion much lower. Thus, Diquiyú, while remaining

traditional, is also becoming modern. San Lucas, on the other hand, is developing modernity by replacing the community with individual households as the locus of economic change.

Although both Diquiyú and San Lucas are categorized as highly marginalized, the marginalization score for Diquiyú is significantly lower: 31432 as opposed to 63913 for San Lucas. I attribute the slightly greater prosperity of Diquiyú to the location of the village. The land around the village is more fertile, there is higher production of food, the village is closer to the highway than the Mixtepec villages, and the large town of Huajuapan de León is nearby. There are also more economic opportunities in the immediate area, thus the slightly greater wealth of Diquiyú even with lower emigration rates. This is consistent with DIGEPO's finding that higher marginalization is associated with greater emigration. Lower emigration is also associated with fewer non-Catholics in the community; this is the case with San Juan Diquiyú.

The level of support for community projects in Diquiyú is comparable to that of Yososcuá. However, the socioeconomic indicators for Diquiyú are more like those in San Lucas. Thus, the residents of Diquiyú have a standard of living comparable to that of San Lucas and an orientation toward community development similar to Yososcuá's. Yososcuá can be seen as somewhere in between the two other villages. There is still some community-level investment, although it has mainly been used to maintain and improve the community's buildings rather than provide services to each household. Yososcuá's percentage of non-Catholics is higher than Diquiyú's but lower than that of San Lucas. The higher marginalization rate for Yososcuá demonstrates that simply having a relatively high percentage of non-Catholics (25 percent in Yososcuá versus 8 percent in Diquiyú) does not predict greater wealth.

The Colonia Sinaí provides several contrasts to the villages in the study. It is a constructed community rather than one that has existed for centuries, as is the case with the villages. Although the members of the colonia identify strongly with the village from which they were expelled, they no longer live in that community. As a constructed entity that is part of a city, it has characteristics that are distinct from the villages. For example, the houses are connected to the city's electrical, water, and drainage systems, which each household must pay for individually. Although the land is still held in common and there are still cargos and tequio, these are more limited than in the villages. Participation in the non-Catholic church is distinct from participation in the Catholic churches in the village, and there are no fiestas, although the community participates in confraternidades with other congregations of the Centros Bíblicos. The availability of work in Huajuapan de León distinguishes the colonia greatly from the villages—the people in the colonia are clearly better off economically. Despite having many symbols of modernity,

however, the majority of the members of the colonia speak Mixteco. This, like other aspects of the community, is clearly intentional rather than an accident of history. Thus the colonia is a mixture of relative modernity with elements of the traditional culture still intact. Finally, the availability of work means that there are no members of the colonia in the migrant stream, although some have spent years there in previous times.

CATHOLICS AND NON-CATHOLICS

The details of migration have had a profound effect on the number of non-Catholics in each community. Diquiyú has a much smaller percentage of non-Catholics than either of the Mixtepec villages. This is because a greater percentage of migrants return to the Mixtepec villages, some having converted while outside the village. The non-Catholics in San Lucas and Yososcuá, furthermore, are very actively engaged in converting their fellow villagers, another contrast with Diquiyú.

The element of time is important in comparing the percentages of non-Catholics. In San Lucas, the first non-Catholic returned in 1991. In Yososcuá, the first non-Catholic returned in 1996. The difference of five years can explain the lower percentage of non-Catholics in Yososcuá: they have had less time to make converts in the village. But San Juan Diquiyú has had non-Catholics since 1981, and it has a lower percentage than even Yososcuá. Here again, the explanation is not so simple as implied by the histories of the Mixtepec villages.

Diquiyú's non-Catholics are singularly unwilling to proselytize. One congregation, the Seventh-day Adventists, consists of a single extended family and has not grown since the 1980s. The other congregation remains very small despite the exhortations of outside pastors to go forth and convince their fellow villagers to convert. The combination of the presence of catechists, who encourage adherence to Catholic principles, the proximity of the town of Tezoatlán and the priests affiliated with the Catholic church there, and an overall tendency to ridicule non-Catholics, makes for a situation that is extremely unfriendly toward the latter. At the same time, the low level of return migrants and circular migrants means that the majority of village members have not seen the large numbers of non-Catholics in places like the valley of San Quintín. The fact that a large percentage of people in the Mixtepec villages are aware of the existence of non-Catholics outside the Mixteca region was given by members of both San Lucas and Yososcuá as reasons for the growth of the non-Catholic congregations there. In Diquiyú, the lower rate of emigration has resulted in a general rejection of non-Catholics as well as a more intact fiesta system.

While the Colonia Sinaí does not send migrants out of the community, the colonia itself is the product of emigration, conversion, and return migration. The early

date of the return of the first converts meant that they were absolutely rejected by the Catholics in the village of San Antonio Yodonduza Monteverde. The members of the village had never heard of religions other than Catholicism, and they refused to accept the offers by the non-Catholics to take on nonreligious cargos rather than participate in the fiesta system. The result, expulsion, seemed to solve the problem, but in fact people in the village have continued to convert even after the expulsion. Thus, the colonia presents yet another scenario for the ways that migration and religious conversion are related.

USOS Y COSTUMBRES IN THREE COMMUNITIES

In the Mixteca region in general, the Catholic aspects of the cargo system are becoming simpler in response to the forces of modernity. Fewer people are willing to take on the work associated with being fiesta sponsors because this involves large expenditures, which result only in higher prestige in the community. The presence of the market economy has created desires for modern consumer goods, which are also a source of prestige and do not require giving goods away.

In San Juan Diquiyú, the fiesta system is largely intact. There is only one fiesta sponsor for all three fiestas, but the support of the village for the fiestas is extensive. The participation of thirty-six families in the planning and execution of the various and complex aspects of the fiesta is an indication that the community still supports the system. However, the level of community support for the fiestas that is still found in Diquiyú is not found in the Mixtepec agencias. In both these villages, the number of fiestas has been reduced from two to one and the fiesta sponsors have had to put on the fiestas by themselves, with little participation by village members. This has placed a tremendous burden on the sponsors, who in 2004 were both returned migrants who wanted to shine in the eyes of their fellow villagers. The contrast between the Mixtepec communities and Diquiyú is stark. In Diquiyú, the community supports the Catholic aspects of the fiestas, while this support is largely missing in the Mixtepec villages. Evidently, the lower emigration rate, along with the smaller percentage of non-Catholics in Diquiyú, have made for fewer changes in the fiesta system.

MIGRATION, RELIGIOUS CHANGE, AND MODERNITY

It seems clear that migration has been the force behind the emergence of Pentecostalism in the Mixteca region. Although today people are changing religion without migrating, this would not have happened if people had not migrated from their villages to the north in the first place. Because of the tradition of usos y costumbres,

this change has had major repercussions in the villages where it is found—that is, in the majority of Mixtec villages.

If Evangelical Protestantism is a type of cultural remittance, what are its effects on the communities where it is found? Many people, some anthropologists included, see the changes in religious behavior as detrimental to the maintenance of traditional culture, of which the Catholic religion is a central part. However, in the communities in this study it does not seem to be as important as some might think. If Mixtec culture is seen as static and unchanging, then such a core change would destroy it. But non-Catholics continue to participate in the secular aspects of traditional culture when they are allowed to do so. Even in the Colonia Sinaí, where all are Pentecostals, one can find elements of traditional Mixtec culture. Strikingly, for example, most residents of the colonia speak Mixteco and identify as Mixtecs. That most people also speak Spanish is an indication of the changes they have gone through in order to survive in the city, where almost no one speaks Mixteco.

There are those who maintain that people join Pentecostal churches in order to avoid the expenses of the fiestas. The proponents of this position range from Catholic members of the villages to scholarly writers (Dow 2001; Cantón Delgado 1997; Gooren 2002). It can also be said that many members of the villages, regardless of religious affiliation, avoid the expenses of the fiestas by remaining away from their communities. Conversion to Protestantism cannot accurately be explained as a desire to have more money. The amount of money and labor expected by Pentecostal churches, while not having to be spent all at once during the year of the cargo, as with the mayordomos, is still quite significant. It is also true that non-Catholics espouse the Protestant ethic of Max Weber—hard work and very few earthly pleasures. The combination of the two clearly is associated with an increase in earthly possessions, whether there is a religious element to the project or not. At the same time, it is as true today as it was in Weber's time that the modern economic system is most successfully negotiated by individuals who act independently, rather than those who adhere to a system where the community in many respects dictates what its members must and must not do.

But all these categories become blurred in the context of everyday life in the villages. To begin with, there is not much evidence that non-Catholics are more successful economically than their Catholic neighbors. Here, wealth differences come from the differences in migration status of the villagers and their relatives. Those who have relatives in the migrant stream are all wealthier than those who do not. Of course, the non-Catholics are for the most part return migrants, so they tend to have more wealth. However, return migrants who are Catholic are not really less poor than the non-Catholics. Perhaps the matter comes down to modernity. Are

the Catholics, who participate more in the Catholic fiestas, less modern than their non-Catholic neighbors?

The reality is that all the villages are both modern and nonmodern. The basic political system of the villages is clearly nonmodern: the community owns the land and has considerable power in allocating resources and political positions. But the members of the communities also express modernity in their ownership of large modern vehicles, stereo systems, and other consumer products available in the United States. In San Lucas, there is a greater emphasis on installing modern conveniences in the houses than on maintaining the community-owned buildings. This could be an indication of greater modernity as well. The fact that the villages are on dirt roads far from any modern conveniences says that they are not modern. The movement away from participation in the more expensive aspects of the religious side of the civil-religious hierarchy is an indication of modernity. However, it is not only the non-Catholics who embrace this move: Catholics also are less willing to contribute to the fiestas.

In the context of the globalized economy that Mixtecs must deal with, moving away from a system that rewards prestige to people who give away large amounts of food as well as sponsoring expensive religious rituals is definitely modern. But unlike many other communities in Mexico, the Mixtecs are being selective in their modernity. They are leaving aside the more onerous Catholic aspects of usos y costumbres while maintaining the community control that is integral to their culture. The extent to which this is happening seems to be contingent on there being both a high degree of emigration and return migration, as well as religious change, in a given community. Importantly, the maintenance of transnational networks, another key element of contemporary Mixtec society, has not been seriously affected by religious change, precisely because other aspects of the culture have not changed. The strong identity with the village of one's birth is still intact, even for people who have not seen their villages for many years. The system of usos y costumbres, while becoming simpler on the Catholic side, remains in force in all of the communities in this study. The combination of these two traditions has so far been the way that Mixtec culture has been maintained, even in the vast migrant streams that constitute the transnational networks.

7

Mixtec Diaspora?

"The Mixtec people are like the Jewish people: they don't disappear."

—a minister of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas, San Marcos, California

INTRODUCTION

The word *diaspora* has been used in so many contexts that it is rapidly becoming too broad to be useful (Kleist 2008:1130; Brubaker 2005). The most common meaning, prior to the 1990s, was the spread of the Jewish people throughout the world after the destruction of Jerusalem (Brubaker 2005:2). Since social scientists began studying transnational networks, diaspora has come to mean almost any group of people who have moved. Hence the question mark in the title of this chapter. Do Mixtecs constitute a diaspora? They are certainly more than a group of people who have moved. They are maintaining their identity with their home villages in very specific ways, regardless of where the villagers are.

Nauja Kleist (2008:1129) offers the following definition of diaspora: "[T]he spatial dispersal of a people from an existing or imaginary homeland, maintaining a sense of collectivity over an extended period of time." Given this definition, we can perhaps consider Mixtecs a diaspora: they are a population that is spread over a very large area, outside their homeland. They are maintaining their cultural traditions through ties with their homeland, which they continue to recognize as an

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important geographic and spiritual place. However, questions must arise over the definition of "an extended period of time." Does this mean one person's lifetime? Two generations? Ten?

Whether or not the children of Mixtec migrants continue to identify as Mixtecs, members of the first generation are extraordinarily connected to their villages. The Mixtecs tend to separate themselves from other Mexicans through their language and their connections to their transnational communities. Each village is represented by one of these. They are found wherever Mixtecs migrate. Most Mixtec adults and many teenagers have cell phones. These help create a kind of long-distance face-to-face relationship unknown to earlier anthropological generations, not to mention earlier Mixtec generations. The cell phones are a major means of maintaining the transnational communities. These tie the migrants together through commitments to contribute to the well-being of the village. The transnational communities are seriously important in the lives of everyone, from the tiniest village to the most remote outpost of Mixtec migrants in the United States. This is a major mechanism that reinforces Mixtec ethnic identity across space and time.

In addition to the ethnic boundary maintained by the Mixtecs themselves, the Mestizo population in Mexico, as well as Latinos in the United States, enforces a boundary defined by discrimination and prejudice. Mixtecs are universally disdained and dismissed. They are seen as dirty, stupid, lazy, useless for anything except brute labor.

The Mixtec ethnic group exists within a much larger Mexican diaspora in the United States.[1] But Mixtecs are a distinct group scattered throughout Mexico as well. Although most Mixtecs now migrate to the United States, there are communities of settled Mixtecs all along the migratory routes. Though some may never have left Mexico, they are members of the transnational communities associated with their villages.

In all of these communities, there are non-Catholic Mixtecs who converted while they were migrating.

MIXTEC MIGRANTS IN MEXICO

The great waves of migration began in the 1980s, but the way was made clear by earlier generations of Mixtecs seeking a better livelihood than that afforded by their homeland. Moisés T. de la Peña notes that there were migrants from the Mixteca in Valle Nacional, Veracruz, at the end of the nineteenth century. This early migration stemmed from the collapse of the market for cochineal produced in the Mixteca and the development of coffee and tobacco farms in Veracruz (De la Peña 1950:153; Atilano Flores 2000:44, 49). These, in addition to the already existing sugarcane plantations,

drew Mixtecs from their hometowns. Mixtecs had established a pattern of circular migration between the Mixteca and Veracruz by the 1920s (Edinger 1985:132).

During this period, they encountered non-Catholic churches in Veracruz. One such church, the Salvador del Mundo, in Córdoba, had Mixtec members in the 1950s and probably earlier. Those converts returned to their villages and converted others there. Eventually, Mixtec members of this church founded a congregation in the Culiacán Valley in Sinaloa. There are also Mixtec members of this church in Baja California.

Between 1942 and 1964, about 7,000 Mixtecs participated in the Bracero Program. This was based on an agreement between the US and Mexican governments, as a way to replace the soldiers who had gone to World War II. Mexican farmworkers were recruited and moved to specific farms, where they were required to stay. They were given room and board and were paid very small wages. Many never saw any part of the United States beyond the farms where they worked. Although the Bracero Program inspired the migration of many Mexicans outside the program, it does not seem to have had a lasting effect on Mixtecs. The small number of participants may be the reason.

In the 1940s, Mixtecs also began to migrate to Mexico City. This was the period of the "Mexican Miracle" (1940–1970), when the government was pouring money into the development of industries in the cities. In Mexico City, Mixtecs got jobs as stable hands, in construction, in leather work, and in metallurgy (De la Peña 1950:156). Some also converted to non-Catholic religions.

While migrants to Veracruz were largely seasonal, the move to Mexico City was for the most part permanent. In one study, Douglas Butterworth (1977) notes that there was a division between migrants who went to Veracruz and those who went to Mexico City: those who went to Veracruz tended to be poorer, less literate, and monolingual, while those who went to Mexico City were wealthier, literate, and bilingual. Those who went to Mexico City tended to stay, marry, and raise their families there (De la Peña 1950:156). These migrants still returned to their villages every year for the fiestas and, like today's migrants, contributed funds for the community to develop schools, roads, and other projects (De la Peña 1950:157). But this migration slowed perceptibly beginning in 1970. Data from the period (Alcalá and Couturier 1994:80) demonstrate that the number of migrants to Veracruz and Mexico City grew every decade from 1950 to 1970, and then decreased.

One reason for this decrease is that in the 1960s, Mixtecs began to migrate to the valley of Culiacán, Sinaloa, to pick tomatoes (Atilano Flores 2000:50). Some also migrated to Sonora and Baja California to pick cotton (Besserer 1999:65). This was in response to the demand for labor on new, large farms growing crops for export to the United States.

Figure 7.1. Advertisement in Sinaloa for seeds for growing products that are exportable to the US.

The World Bank, along with US banks, provided credit to the growers of these crops, and the Mixtecs provided the labor (Astorga Lira and Commander 1989:777; Mares 1991:266–68). Table 7.1 documents the increase in indigenous people in Sinaloa from 1980 to 2000. Interviews with representatives of the government agency Jornaleros Agrícolas in Culiacán established that the vast majority of these were Mixtecs.[2] They migrated to the fields during the production season, and returned to their villages for the rest of the year. This situation was more than satisfactory for the growers, who "are attracted by a low-wage, non-organized labour force, whose reproduction costs are borne to a large extent by the migrants themselves" (Astorga Lira and Commander 1989:777).

CONVERSION IN CULIACÁN

It was in Sinaloa that large numbers of Mixtecs began to learn about non-Catholic religions. While missionaries were not allowed in the villages of the Mixteca, they easily gained permission to proselytize in the valley of Culiacán. There, Evangelical missionaries set up camps where they played religious music, showed religious films, gave testimony, and generally appealed to everyone to convert. They held services on the edges of the migrant labor camps. The missionaries gave away cassette tapes with sermons and music. They also gave away used clothes and Bibles. In the Mixtec

Table 7.1. Indigenous language speakers, Sinaloa

	1970	*1990*	*2000*	*2010*
Number who speak an indigenous language	11,970	31,390	49,744	23,841

Source: INEGI 1970, 1990, 2000, 2010.

Table 7.2. Non-Catholics, Sinaloa

	1970	*1990*	*2000*	*2010*
Number of non-Catholic Christians	14,148	76,926	221,418	205,651
Percentage of total	1.4%	2.4%	4.9%	7.4%

Source: INEGI 1970, 1990, 2000, 2010.

world of the Mixtecs, this was an experience almost without precedent. Far from their villages and the pull of tradition, and without a similar presence by representatives of the Catholic Church, some Mixtecs began paying attention to the missionaries. Some converted. However, the numbers of converts at the beginning was small. There were enough so that when they returned to the Mixteca they began to try to convert their fellow -villagers. The rejection of other religions by the villages in general, and the punishments for not participating in the fiesta system, were enough to persuade the great majority of migrants to remain folk-Catholics, or to return to the migrant stream. They had begun to learn of the existence of other religions. They also realized that conversion is much easier outside of the Mixteca.

Migration to Sinaloa, mostly seasonal, increased over the years (Atilano Flores 2000:51). The number of non-Catholics also increased (see table 7.2). It is not possible to establish what percentage of the converts were indigenous people, but interviews with individuals in Oaxaca and in Sinaloa have established that there were many. Eventually, two Pentecostal churches were founded by Mixtecs who had settled permanently in Villa Juárez, a town near Culiacán where farm workers who have decided to stay make their homes. One church, the Salvador del Mundo, was founded in 1990 by a man whose mother was converted in the 1950s by a man who had migrated to Córdoba, Veracruz, and returned to the village, Santiago Naranjas. The Salvador del Mundo pastor had heard about the Bible from his mother in 1959, but ignored the information. He traveled to Mexico City by himself when he was twelve years old. There, he became a drunk (his word: "*borracho*"). He lived in Mexico City for about ten years. He met his wife there. After he married, he returned to the village in Oaxaca. He began to live by the rules of the non-Catholic church; he gave up drinking. He says, "The doctrine caused a radical change in my life." In 1979 he and his wife began migrating to

Sinaloa. There were no non-Catholic churches in the labor camps. He went back to drinking. During their years as circular migrants, he would stop drinking and attend church services when he was in the village, but he began drinking again in Sinaloa. In 1982 he had a true conversion experience that changed his life forever. He was baptized in the village, and soon began proselytizing in the fields of Sinaloa. In 1990 he and the people he converted created a congregation that is tied to the church in Veracruz. The trajectory of Hermano Pedro and his family helps to portray the interplay of migration, religious change, and the continuous connections to the village.

There are other non-Catholic churches in the Culiacán Valley, but the only churches with Mixtec members are the Salvador del Mundo and the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas. The IJA in Culiacán was founded in the 1990s by Mixtecs from Juxtlahuaca. The pastor in 2005 had begun going to Sinaloa in 1984. He worked in the tomato fields along with his brother and sister, then returned to their village, San Andrés, in the municipio of Tezoatlán. They were circular migrants for several years. Then, in 1989 he met his wife in Villa Juárez. She is from San Miguel Cuevas, Juxtlahuaca. They were married in 1990 and settled in Colonia Amapas, a small village near Villa Juárez. They were invited to attend the Salvador del Mundo church in Villa Juárez. They attended that church for several months, then stopped going. Around 1992 or 1993, members of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas visited from Juxtlahuaca. These were very animated speakers who gained their attention and eventually their allegiance to the church.

The current congregation was established in 1994. The largest Mexican congregation of the IJA, in Juxtlahuaca, helped them buy some land for the church building. Many families converted and the congregation grew. Members then began to migrate to other parts of Mexico, primarily Baja California. Now, there are few Mixtecs left to convert. Members from Oaxaca stop in Colonia Amapas to attend services and bring news of other communities before continuing their migrations to the north or south. Today, the resident congregation has fifteen adult members, twelve of them Mixtecs. These are the founding members of the church who have settled in Sinaloa.

Thus, what started as the work of missionaries in Sinaloa became the project of Mixtec converts. Their churches grew as the numbers of migrants grew. Then the Mixtecs began to leave the area. Table 7.1 demonstrates this change: the number of indigenous people in Sinaloa decreased by almost half between 2000 and 2010.

As with Mexico City and Veracruz, the population of Mixtecs in Sinaloa grew for some years and then declined (INEGI 1990, 2000, 2010). By 2005 there were only thirteen families of Mixtecs in the migrant stream in Sinaloa.[3] This contrasts with many hundreds during the peak of migration to Sinaloa. Today, the majority of

Figure 7.2. The Sinaloa congregation of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas, in front of the church.

Mixtecs in Sinaloa have settled there. While they no longer migrate for work, they continue to participate as nodes in the transnational networks of their communities.

One of the places that some moved to was northern Sonora. While Sinaloa's Mixtec population decreased, it grew in Sonora.[4]

MIGUEL ALEMÁN, SONORA

Miguel Alemán (population: 30,000) lies at the end of a long, potholed highway between Hermosillo and the Sea of Cortez. Here in the middle of the Sonoran Desert, among the irrigated fields of grapes, pecans, vegetables, and other crops, is a community with a large population of indigenous people. These include primarily Mixtecs, but also Triquis from Oaxaca, Mayos and Yaquis from Sonora, and members of other indigenous groups.

The history of Miguel Alemán coincides with the agricultural history of the region. Until 1980 the main crops were wheat and cotton, produced for domestic consumption. While cotton requires labor for picking, both cotton and wheat are largely capital-intensive crops. With the introduction of neoliberal policies in the 1980s, the United States became a major importer of products from the region. The area began to produce vegetables, grapes, pecans, and oranges for export. This

resulted in a drastic change in the economics of the region. In 1980 wheat and cotton constituted 58.6 percent of the crops, while grapes and vegetables made up 9.4 percent. In 2000 wheat and cotton had declined to 21 percent while grapes and vegetables had increased to 36.7 percent (Calvario Parra 2007:50). The increase in labor-intensive crops led to a new demand for labor. The growth of Miguel Alemán demonstrates this process: in 1980 the population was 3,274, but by 2000 it was 22,505 (Calvario Parra 2007:49).

This demand for labor evidently attracted workers from Culiacán as well as from further south and from Sonora itself. Beyond the opportunities in Miguel Alemán, however, is its proximity to the US border. Now, many Mixtec families have settled in the town, but the men migrate to the United States and back, depending on the demand for labor there. This arrangement clearly benefits growers in both countries. When there is demand for labor in the United States, it is readily available. When the demand decreases, the workers return to Mexico, where they work on farms that produce crops for the US market. Or they have no work. As the cost of living in Mexico is lower than in the United States, the unemployed return to Miguel Alemán.

The indigenous population of Miguel Alemán is large enough to justify an office of the Comité para el Desarrollo de las Comunidades Indígenas (CDI), the successor to the Instituto Nacional Indigenista. The CDI in Miguel Alemán supports this population in many small ways, helping people who have problems with the growers, providing access to health services, and cooperating with the indigenous groups that have been established in the community. The Mixtecs, most of whom come from the village of Santos Reyes Tepejillo, in the municipio of San Juan Mixtepec, have formed the Mixteco Yosonuvicu (plain of clouds) de Sonora.[5] This group fosters the maintenance of the Mixteco language, the celebration of Mixtec customs such as the Day of the Dead and the Guelaguetza, and Mixtec culture generally. The group works with the CDI to help Mixtecs in need of services. Tellingly, the group does not support the celebration of saints' day fiestas. As an alternative, the various indigenous groups of Miguel Alemán have established a (fairly recent) tradition of celebrating indigenous identity, with people dressing in traditional garb and producing foods traditional to their group to share with all. This celebration is held on October 12, Columbus Day in the United States but El Día de la Raza in Mexico. This is an effort to maintain indigenous ethnicity in the face of Mestizo discrimination. Mixteco Yosonuvicu also coordinates with members of the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales, an umbrella group established by Mixtecs but open to all indigenous workers in the United States and Mexico. These are organizations that may lead to a true Mixtec diaspora beyond the first and second migrant generations.

NON-CATHOLICS IN MIGUEL ALEMÁN

The history of Mixtec non-Catholics in Miguel Alemán is essentially part of the history of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas; it also recapitulates the history of Mixtecs in the area in general. There are many non-Catholic churches in the town, but as far as I could determine, there are no Mixtec members of any church besides the IJA. One of the first Mixtecs to arrive in Miguel Alemán was Raúl Rojas Villavicencio, who is from Santos Reyes Tepejillo. He had been to Baja California, where he attended non-Catholic services in 1982. He returned to his village, where he was baptized by one of the original converts to the church, who was himself a migrant in California when he converted. Here is a good example of the complexly interwoven life of migration and conversion.

Hermano Raúl arrived in Miguel Alemán in 1983, one of the first of the great waves of emigrants from the Mixteca to the outside world. There was no IJA in the town, and he attended services in Hermosillo. The congregation there was Mestizo. Hermano Raúl had met the pastor of this congregation in Oaxaca, so he felt comfortable asking him for help to establish a church in Miguel Alemán. With his help, the congregation was formally constituted in 1985. Now there are two congregations, both with majorities of Mixtec members, although the number of Triqui converts is increasing. Thus does the church expand and grow.

Miguel Alemán is an important destination for Mixtecs, especially those from Santos Reyes Tepejillo. And it has a sizeable number of Mixtec non-Catholics. But it pales before the immensity of the valley of San Quintín, Baja California.

BAJA CALIFORNIA

Mixtecs migrated to Baja California beginning in the 1950s. The first migrations were to the Mexicali Valley, which had been producing cotton. As in Miguel Alemán, the proximity of the valley to the markets of the United States led to a change from cotton to vegetables, which the Mixtecs were hired to work and harvest. But it was to the valley of San Quintín that Mixtecs would be drawn in their thousands, beginning in the 1980s. Like Mexicali, San Quintín had primarily produced cotton and wheat for domestic consumption. Ejidos and small farms made up the bulk of the land tenure. In the 1980s, San Quintín began to be transformed into an economic system that combined dependence on foreign capital, a rapid transformation of infrastructure, and the importation of labor from the impoverished south (Camargo Martínez 2004:39). These changes were part of the structural adjustments mandated by the International Monetary Fund as a part of the agreements to restructure Mexico's debt after its 1982 default.

SAN QUINTÍN

The valley of San Quintín is situated about 190 miles to the south of Tijuana along the Pacific coast of Baja California. Although there is not enough rainfall to support much agriculture, agribusinesses began digging wells in the 1980s. They were provided capital by US investors, who also helped with technical information, seeds and other inputs (Quinones 2001:101–3). Drilling for water has continued despite the fact that commercial agriculture extracts six times more groundwater than the recharge rate of the watersheds (Zlolniski 2011:571). The introduction of drip irrigation and greenhouses, along with desalination technology, financed by US agribusiness companies, has benefited only the growers. At the same time, the population of the valley has grown from 38,000 in 1990 to 93,000 in 2010 (Zlolniski 2011:571). This increase has put even more stress on water resources. While the growers have access to wells subsidized by the government, the workers have little to no water from wells. Instead, they must buy water from pipas at exorbitant rates (Zlolniski 2011:575). Thus, the wealthy producers pay less than the impoverished farmworkers for water. And competition for water continues.

Across the valley extend vast fields and enormous greenhouses where high-tech agriculture is practiced with drip irrigation, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. The ground is prepared with machines, but the need for hand labor has led to the importation of thousands of indigenous people from southern Mexico. Their work is hardly high-tech. It is backbreaking, long hours of careful tending of plants and careful picking of the products. These are, for the most part, exported directly to the United States.

Beyond the greenhouses and the agribusiness fields, the valley is an arid desert. The towns, whose existence is mainly supported by the commerce associated with the agricultural activities, are situated along the only paved road, the highway from Tijuana to La Paz. There is no form of entertainment such as movie theaters; there are no Catholic churches. The laborers are confined to camps controlled by the growers, or live in colonias, rural slums divided by ethnic identity. The largest ethnic group is the Mixtecs. They were the first migrants from the south, and many of the earliest to arrive have built houses in the valley. These people migrate to the United States, Sinaloa, and their villages as work is available or as they feel the need to return to Oaxaca (see figure 7.3). They maintain houses in the villages as well as in San Quintín. In 2001 there were about 20,000 Mixtecs in the valley; they comprised about 65 percent of the indigenous population there, according to Jornaleros Agrícolas.[6]

Although Mixtecs migrate to wherever they find work, there is a close economic and calendrical relationship between San Quintín and Culiacán. With production in Culiacán extending from December to May, the farms of San Quintín can employ workers from June to December. In this way, migration that had been

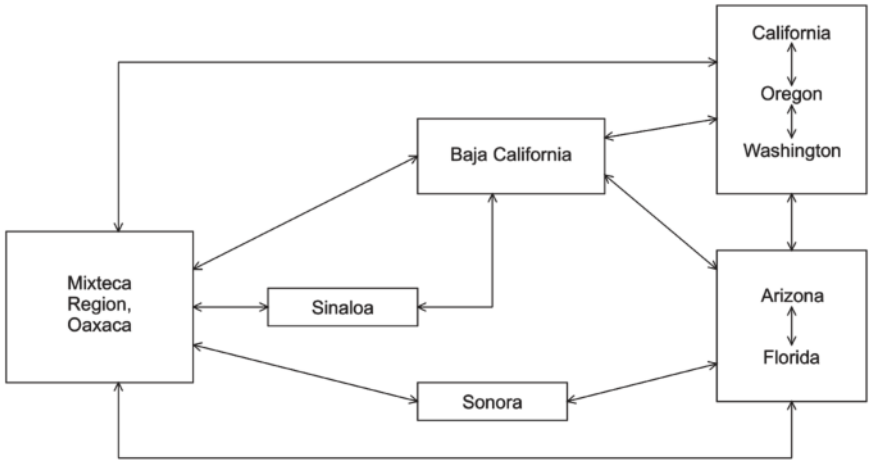

Figure 7.3. Some patterns of migration by Mixtecs.

circular between Oaxaca and Sinaloa was transformed into a complex system of migration from Oaxaca to Culiacán, Baja California, and Oaxaca (see figure 7.3). In many cases, migrants have remained in the Sinaloa-Baja California circuit semi-permanently, acquiring houses in San Quintín or in Culiacán and only returning to Oaxaca intermittently.

The isolation of the valley, and the lack of anything to do in the meager time available beyond work and the struggle to get food, clothing, and the other necessities of life provide a perfect opportunity for evangelization by US missionaries. Add to this isolation the fact that the workers are far from their homes and families, away from their churches and saints, and essentially abandoned by the Catholic Church, and the possibility for conversion increases. The proximity of San Quintín to the border is a further impetus for the missionaries, who can go on a weekend or for a week and return to their regular jobs in the United States. This is not generally possible in Culiacán, much farther from the international line.

Many US missionaries are doctors, dentists, nurses, and teachers. Volunteers from different US churches have established a tradition of going to the valley every year. They offer their services for free as part of the evangelization process. Others have experience in construction and help to build houses for the migrants. Large numbers of young people go to the valley during the summer to help with various activities. These offers of help make an impression on poor migrants who have no other access to such resources.

There are also great campaigns to reach out to the unconverted, with missionary groups arriving in large numbers to give sermons, show videos, hand out food,

Bibles, and used clothes, and in general make themselves available to explain the doctrine to anyone who will listen. They build enormous revival tents where services go on for days at a time. The pressure to convert is great. The reality is that the valley of San Quintín is a kind of hothouse for religious conversion as well as for the production of vegetables. There are few places in Mexico with such a concentration, variety, and number of non-Catholic churches and, consequently, of non-Catholics. The effects of this immersion in Evangelical doctrine are felt in the Mixteca region as well, because people who convert in San Quintín return to their villages filled with the desire to spread the gospel to their friends and relatives. Of course, their acceptance, as seen in chapters 3 through 6, is not always complete.

Once established in San Quintín, Mixtecs began to hear of the United States and the work available there. This information led to a large migration to the north. However, San Quintín remains an important place for Mixtecs who migrate to and from the United States. Those who have houses in the valley return to them from the US. Those who migrate from the Mixteca to the United States sometimes go to San Quintín for a time, waiting to return when there is work across the border. Some migrate seasonally among San Quintín, California, Oregon, Washington, and back to San Quintín. Others stop in San Quintín on their way back from the United States to Oaxaca (see figure 7.3). With the growth of the Mixtec migrant population, the variety of possibilities for migration has also expanded. One important factor that determines who migrates where is the village of origin. People migrate to places where fellow-villagers are to be found. In the United States, migrant communities tend to consist of people from one or two villages. Thus, while in San Quintín there are Mixtecs from many different villages, these tend to sort themselves out upon migrating north. Even in San Quintín, people from the same village have their houses close to each other.

TIJUANA

For decades, Tijuana, on the border with Southern California, was the gathering place for people who wanted to cross into the United States without authorization. Some millions of Mexicans, including thousands of Mixtecs, did cross the largely unmarked border until 1994. In that year, the US Border Patrol instituted Operation Gatekeeper, intended to deter the flow. While the number of undocumented immigrants apprehended increased, there were still many—the majority—who entered undeterred. It was not until after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that the border began to be seriously fortified. Today, there are three steel fences in succession at the Tijuana border and Border Patrol officials are dispersed thickly on the US side. It has become very difficult to cross on foot, although many

immigrants continue to enter hidden in vehicles. The number of people hoping to cross at Tijuana is still fairly large, but they tend to become discouraged and stay, looking for work on the Mexican side of the border. Alternatively, they cross farther east, where the Border Patrol is less densely distributed. So Tijuana is less of a gateway now than it was before 1994.

Mixtecs began arriving in Tijuana in the 1950s (Clark Alfaro 1989:12), but it was not until the 1980s that they became really visible. The most obvious are the so-called Marías, a pejorative name for the Mixteca women who are everywhere in the tourist districts of the city. Some spread themselves out on the sidewalks, along with their children, and beg for money. Others gather at the exit gates that lead to the United States, where hundreds of vehicles wait for hours in line. The Mixtecas, along with other merchants, offer fresh flowers, gum, and other cheap merchandise for sale to the captive audience of potential shoppers.

There are some thousands of Mixtecs in distinct neighborhoods in the poorest parts of Tijuana. One of the first colonias (squatter settlements) to be settled was the Colonia Obrera (Clark Alfaro 1989:12–13) on the city's edge. People who came later settled in colonias farther out from the original shantytowns. With names like El Florido (flowering place) and Valle Verde (green valley), which in no way describe these dusty agglomerations of shacks, such communities appear regularly on the outskirts of the city, sometimes almost overnight. The Mixtecs who live in these places have generally settled in Tijuana. Many migrated to the United States before 1987, when the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) went into effect. This law legalized some 2 million unauthorized immigrants, among them all the Mixtecs who had ever entered the United States up until that time. Those with permits to work in the United States cross legally when there is work and spend the time between jobs in Tijuana. Their families stay behind. Thus, Tijuana is to some extent a much larger version of Miguel Alemán to the east. However, many more villages are represented in Tijuana. In 1989, Victor Clark Alfaro (1989:13) identified thirty-one different villages as represented in Tijuana. Without a doubt, there are more today. Mixtecs from the same villages cluster in the same neighborhoods. Their children grow up together, and to the extent possible the village life is recreated in the new communities on the edge of the city.

The number of non-Catholic churches in Tijuana is unknown, in part because it grows daily. There are many—this much is known. The church with the largest concentration of Mixtecs is the IJA. People from the same villages congregate in the same church groups. The largest congregation is situated in Valle Verde. The majority of the members are from San Juan Piñas, in the district of Juxtlahuaca. The pastor, like many of the members, spent years working on farms in the US before becoming legal under IRCA and eventually settling in Tijuana. Now they have the

luxury of living cheaply in Mexico and going to the fields of the United States when there is work.

The church helps to maintain village identity by re-creating village life among the members. Members who are in transit visit, bringing news of people along the migrant stream. Most members of this congregation do not return to Oaxaca because they fear being expelled again from their village. This rejection by San Juan Piñas has led to a situation where the children, born outside the village, do not speak Mixteco and do not identify with the community. They do identify with the church, however.

The case of San Juan Piñas may be exceptional. There has been a great deal of animosity between the Catholics and non-Catholics there, and many non-Catholics, in the United States as well as in Baja California, express exasperation with their fellow villagers. As in the cases of San Juan Diquiyú, San Lucas, and Yososcuá, there are members of other villages who belong to the IJA and other non-Catholic congregations, and who continue to participate in the life of the villages, taking on secular cargos. They maintain homes in the villages and their children tend to identify somewhat with the community in Oaxaca and to speak some Mixteco. This pattern seems to be more common than that of San Juan Piñas.

MIXTECS IN THE UNITED STATES

Today there are hundreds of thousands of Mixtecs throughout the United States. This vast migration is outside the realm of my study. There are also many non-Catholic churches to which Mixtecs convert, but the largest concentration of Mixtec non-Catholics is in the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas. In an attempt to limit the project to a manageable size and scope, I have focused on the communities on the West Coast of the United States where Mixtecs migrate and where there are congregations of the IJA.

For the most part, Mixtecs in the United States are farmworkers. Some have been able to get jobs in construction, but many of those disappeared as a result of the economic crash of 2008. The lowest paid and most difficult jobs are those that seem to belong to Mixtecs. This is partly because many speak little or no Spanish and even less English. In addition, most have only a few years of schooling. However, it is also because of the discrimination against them by Mexicans and Mexican Americans. This has resulted, over generations, in the belief on the part of some Mixtecs that they are not worthy of better jobs. They would rather live and work together at difficult jobs than to suffer by themselves the slurs of non-Mixtecs. In the United States, they suffer a double discrimination: the Anglos look down on the Latinos and the Latinos look down on the Mixtecs.

Major differences between farm work in Mexico and the United States are that US growers do not provide housing or transportation to the fields and the government does not regulate the treatment of the workers. In Mexico, the housing provided by the growers is terrible, but it is usually free. The growers transport the laborers to and from the fields at no cost. The government agency Jornaleros Agrícolas monitors the conditions of the farmworkers, and negotiates with growers for better standards for the workers. There is no such agency in the United States, and most workers must find housing and a way to the fields without help from the growers or the government.

CALIFORNIA

In California, where rents are very high, often several families live crammed into a single apartment, one family to each bedroom and one in the living room. While there are at least running water and functioning bathrooms, the living conditions are only marginally better than in Baja California and Sinaloa. And *raiteros*, people who have vehicles and transport those who do not, charge as much as $5 per ride in each direction. While the pay is much higher than in Mexico, expenses also mount up. It is still more profitable to work in the United States, however. This is why so many prefer to work there.

Northern San Diego County

A little to the north of the sprawling city of San Diego lie farms where vegetables and fruits are grown. This is where the first Mixtecs to arrive in California found work. Most had already come through Sinaloa and San Quintín and had experience with the kinds of crops found in San Diego: tomatoes, onions, and strawberries. They also were used to terrible housing, but in this case the situation was much worse, as growers did not even make an effort to house them. They lived in the canyons interspersed among the fields, under plastic sheeting, with no access to fresh water or sanitary facilities (Hernández and O'Connor 2013; Velasco Ortiz 2005:78; Chavez 1992:63–69). The fields were far from any grocery stores, and the undocumented status of the workers kept them from straying far from the workplace. Men sold food and drink from trucks and the migrants made do with whatever they could buy from them.

Eventually, Mixtecs found more permanent housing and settled in the communities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, Escondido, and Poway. In each of these towns are to be found congregations of the IJA. Each congregation is made up mostly of Mixtecs from one or two villages. San Marcos and Escondido vary

somewhat from the pattern, but the majority of Mixtecs there are from the same area of Juxtlahuaca.

It was in Vista, in 1978, that the first Mixtecs were baptized into the church. Carlos and Herminio Cruz, from San Jerónimo Progreso, and Lorenzo Mendoza, from Tecomaxtlahuaca, were all baptized in that year. They immediately spread out to the villages of the Mixteca, relaying the news of the gospel. The possibilities for converting villagers in the villages were almost nil at that time, however, and so the converts chose to move to the places where their fellow villagers had migrated in order to make converts. They traveled separately, but in coordination, to San Quintín and Sinaloa as well. They baptized a sizeable number of current members of the church. Lorenzo Mendoza in particular became famous as an evangelist who converted hundreds of Mixtecs. These, in turn, became missionaries to people from their own villages in the migrant stream.

Central California

On the US west coast, Mixtecs make up the largest indigenous population. In California, largest populations of Mixtecs are found in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Monterey Counties, although there are sizeable numbers in the Central Valley towns of Madera, Exeter, Farmersville, and Bakersfield (Mines, Nichols, and Runsten 2010:18). Mixtecs work on farms that produce fruits and vegetables. In Oxnard, in Ventura County, and Santa Maria, in Santa Barbara County, the Mixtecs pick strawberries. Of all the horticultural jobs, strawberries are the most labor-intensive and the lowest-paying crop. In the Central Valley, Mixtecs work on farms that produce peaches and grapes, also among the most difficult crops to produce.

There are IJA congregations in many of the communities in central California, where Mixtecs live. The largest is in Santa Maria, in Santa Barbara County. The Mixtec population of the city is largely from San Juan Piñas, and it was in Santa Maria that some of the first converts settled, in the 1980s. There are now four congregations of the church.

OREGON AND WASHINGTON

Oregon and Washington both have Mixtec populations concentrated in agricultural areas. The growing season there is short—three months—so the farm population must migrate or find other work. The Mixtec population in Oregon is concentrated in the Willamette Valley, in the towns of Woodburn and Salem (Stephen 2007:86–88). Lynn Stephen (2001:192–93) estimated that in 2001 there were 10,000 Mixtecs permanently settled in Oregon, with between 20,000 and 30,000 circular migrants.

Salem, Oregon (pop. 156,000) has a few thousand Mixtecs who work in the fields, some of whom now also work as gardeners or, in a few cases, in factories. A few have established their own businesses such as restaurants (Stephen 2007:88). Some find work in food packing plants or in canneries (Stephen 2001:204); this allows them to live in Salem year-round. Regardless of their jobs, they are still very poor. They live in the Latino neighborhood, and some are members of the IJA there. The Mixtec congregation began in 1990 with one family. It now has about sixty members.

Mount Vernon, Washington, like other places where Mixtecs live, is surrounded by fields of vegetables and fruits. Mixtecs live there and in the nearby communities of Burlington, Lyndon, and Conway. There are several migrant camps as well. The migrants are from San Miguel Cuevas and Juxtlahuaca. They work the berry crops and then move to warmer climates where there is year-round employment. Mixtecs who live in the area permanently are from Putla de Guerrero, to the south of Juxtlahuaca. The IJA in Conway has about 300 members, most from Putla. The pastor was the first Mixtec to arrive in the area from Putla. He let fellow villagers know that there was work in Washington, and many moved there. There is also a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses with Mixtec members.

It is difficult to estimate how many Mixtecs live in this area because government officials tend to lump them with non-indigenous Mexicans. The officials are not interested in the number of people who speak indigenous languages because they believe that these languages are not "real." One estimate of the number of permanently settled Mixtecs is 2,000.[7] Despite the somewhat cavalier attitude of state employees, the fact is that immigrants in general and farmworkers in particular have better lives in Oregon and Washington than in California. In those states, growers provide housing for migrants and even some permanent workers. Washington State allows people without permanent resident status to get drivers' licenses; these are not available in Oregon, and have only recently been allowed in California. In general, workers report that their lives are better in Oregon and Washington than in other places they have worked.

DISCUSSION

Even taking into account only the migrants on the west coast of Mexico and the United States, it is clear that the trajectories of Mixtecs have been complex and convoluted. Some migrated as young men to Culiacán, then to Baja California, and on to California and Washington. Some migrated directly to the United States, where they moved from one place to another according to which crops were in season. While the original migrants tended to be young men, today entire families migrate. Some move back and forth from Oaxaca to different communities depending on

a variety of factors. In Culiacan, San Quintín, and Tijuana there is a conglomeration of people from different villages. Members of the same villages tend to live near each other, but the variety and number of communities makes this rather difficult. In the United States, where migrants go depends largely on where they are from. For example, the people in Oceanside are predominantly from San Martín del Estado, in the district of Silacayoapam. The people in Poway are from San Juan Piñas, Juxtlahuaca, as are the people in Santa Maria. The people in Oxnard are from San Martín Peras and San Miguel Cuevas, Silacayoapam. The people in Mount Vernon, Washington are primarily from Putla de Guerrero, Putla District, and San Miguel Cuevas.

The reason for the difference in settlement patterns between Baja California and the United States is, I believe, that the people in Baja California were recruited from many different villages by contractors who went to the Mixteca to find people who were willing to work for very low wages. They found them wherever they looked. This is why there is a variety of villages represented there. The populations of Mixtecs in California, Oregon, and Washington developed from word of mouth. One person went to Vista, and people from his village followed. Another went to Oceanside and was followed by his fellow villagers. At the same time, people from one village have a great preference for each other over people from another village. This reinforces the pattern of one or two villages being represented in each community where Mixtecs are found. Once a group has been established, people from that village go there. In this way, the villages are re-created in the migrant stream. It is easy to find the migrants from any village, as they tend to stay together and move together. Also, they all have cell phones. Thus, the transnational communities are solidified geographically as well as economically and socially.

This pattern is replicated to some extent in the congregations of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas. While there is some variation, the predominant pattern is for one village to be represented in a single congregation. The IJA helps to reinforce village identity by re-creating the life of the village within the congregation. During services, members ask for help and prayers. They share their happy moments and their moments of sorrow. Sometimes fellow villagers arrive from other migrant communities or from the village itself. They bring news and greetings from other members of the village as well as other members of the congregation. Importantly, the church provides a space where Mixtecs can be themselves without suffering discrimination from others. They can speak Mixtec without being laughed at. The members of the congregation know details about village life and the life of migration that they can share in a protected environment. There is a sense of belonging unavailable in any other social context. An important question is: will the children of the people who migrated continue to belong to the IJA?

GENERATIONS, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Mixtec population is still largely in its first generation of migration. Certainly the people who migrated are still attached to their villages. However, the question is whether or not this connection will continue into the second generation. What about the third generation? At the moment, the second generation is quite young. Most are still children. The third generation barely exists. Thus, that part of the question cannot be answered today. If the second and third generations of Mixtecs continue to identify solidly with the home communities of their parents and grandparents, they will defy the history of immigration to the United States. In this history, the second generation begins to acculturate quickly and the third generation is, for the most part, culturally assimilated. The case of immigrants from Mexico is somewhat different because many do not experience the upward mobility of other immigrant groups. This segmented assimilation stems from the fact that Mexicans are seen as nonwhite and are relegated to a status similar to that of African Americans (López and Stanton-Salazar 2001:59–61; Portes and Rumbaut 2001:280).

If racism is the cause of this stalled progress for Mexican migrants generally, then the effects will be stronger for Mixtecs, who suffer racist discrimination from their own compatriots. This situation makes for "reactive ethnicity," the development of a new identity in the second generation as a reaction to rejection by the larger society (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:284–85). While this process involves maintaining ethnic distinctions, it is also accompanied by downward mobility. It is difficult to imagine what downward mobility would be for most Mixtecs, but one might see a lack of upward mobility as the more realistic pattern. In any event, acculturation—the loss of the culture of the migrant population—occurs regardless of upward mobility or the lack of it. This is true of Mixtec populations in Mexico as well as the United States.

Some characteristics of the Mixtec migrant community indicate that perhaps the second generation, at least, will be more strongly tied to the home villages than the second generations of other migrant groups. Most Mixtecs migrate with relatives who are from the same village. They tend to go where there are other members of their village. The fact that the villages are very small, cohesive social units transfers to the migrant communities. The families live near each other. The face-to-face quality of village life is reproduced, to some extent, in the transnational networks. So, children of migrants from the same village go to the same schools, live near each other, play together, and grow up together, even in the context of geographical mobility. Many are related to each other. They grow up knowing everything about each other and each other's families, and so the life of the village continues. Given this unusual cohesion in the second generation, it seems likely that some will

continue to honor the village identity of their parents. On the other hand, migrant children who spend even a short time in the United States begin to learn English. They watch television and become accustomed to the kind of consumer goods seen there. They make at least a few friends who are not Mixtec. All of these factors can contribute to a rejection of village life, if not necessarily village identity. It is possible to continue to be Mixtec and not identify with a particular village, but the first generation is not likely to do this. Perhaps entities with broader appeal are the future of Mixtecs in the United States.

ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS

There are movements toward a pan-indigenous identity by several organizations formed by migrants over the years. The strongest of these is the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations) (FIOB), an umbrella group that includes Mixtecs, Zapotecs, some Purépechas and some Triquis. Founded in 1994, FIOB now has offices in Fresno, Santa Maria, Bakersfield, Los Angeles, and San Diego, California, as well as Tijuana, San Quintín, and Juxtlahuaca. In 1995 the group established the magazine *Tequio*, was established, as well as a website with an electronic version of the magazine containing information on FIOB and other migrant organizations. A program of interpreters has been developed to assist indigenous monolingual speakers to deal with legal and health problems (Velasco Ortiz 2005:88–89).

Another important organization is the Unidad Popular Benito Juárez (Benito Juárez Popular Union) (UPBJ), centered in Bakersfield. This, too, incorporates several smaller organizations and has a program of interpreters.[8] The UPBJ hosts an annual Guelaguetza—a traditional Oaxacan festival that includes representatives of all the indigenous groups of the state—in Bakersfield.

The Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (Binational Center for Indigenous Oaxacan Development) was founded in 1993 in Fresno. This is a non-profit that focuses on helping Oaxacan immigrants with day-to-day problems such as seeking help from the government, understanding the school system, participating in the health care system, and translating and filling out forms. The organization is also developing a group of trilingual youth leaders who visit households and help with the problems of the residents. It sponsors cultural events such as Guelaguetzas, a Oaxacan tradition, and the maintenance of traditions such as indigenous languages and fiestas. Unlike FIOB, it is not political in orientation. Today the Centro has offices in Fresno, Santa Maria, Greenfield, and Los Angeles. Its members include Mixtecs, Zapotecs, and Triquis, all indigenous groups from Oaxaca.

In general, FIOB is seen as a defender of workers' and renters' rights, as well as a coordinator between migrant communities in the United States and Mexico, while UPBJ and the Centro are seen as cultural organizations dedicated to community service, education, and the continuation of indigenous traditions. All three began as Mixtec organizations but now include members of other indigenous migrant groups as well. These organizations are like Yosonuvicu, the group established in Miguel Alemán. There is a push toward recognizing and reinforcing indigenous identity rather than allegiance to any village or even any indigenous group. However, in the case of the Mixtecs, village identity remains predominant. It is reinforced by ongoing participation in village transnational networks.

The Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), was founded in Ventura County in 2000 by Sandy Young, a nurse practitioner in Oxnard. The group's original goal was to find interpreters for the Mixtec patients at the clinic where Young works. Today, the organization engages in many different activities. It organizes meetings of Mixtec families to provide them with information as well as food and such items as diapers and school supplies. MICOP also supports youth groups and is sponsoring an anti-bullying campaign in the schools to educate students about the negative effects of pejorative terms like *Oaxaquita* and *indio* on Mixtecs. MICOP staff assist with navigating the bureaucracy by helping to fill out forms, giving information on benefits such as food stamps and health care, and translating documents in English or Spanish into Mixteco. Unlike FIOB, the Centro Binacional, and the UPBJ, MICOP does not have activities beyond Ventura County. Like them, it welcomes members of other indigenous groups, who have begun moving to Oxnard in very small numbers.

Velasco Ortiz (2005:127–60) indicates that the leaders of organizations such as these represent an emerging intellectual elite. It is probable that such elites are a necessary development for the continuation of Mixtecs as Mixtecs in the migrant streams and communities. These organizations reinforce Mixtec identity. Without them it seems more likely that Mixtecs will acculturate to Latino culture. They may be at the bottom of the economic ladder, but they will be culturally similar to other Hispanics. They will lose their language, their culture, and most importantly, their links to the home villages. Unless the second generation continues to honor the ties with the transnational communities, the Mixtec ethnic organizations are the last barrier to such losses.

Formal organizations like FIOB, the Centro, and MICOP contrast with the transnational communities. They depend on formal relationships built on ethnic identity and class rather than the informal ties of kinship and community. The fact that all the migrant organizations generated by Mixtecs have experienced significant disputes over money and organizational matters (Velasco Ortiz 2005:116–26)

demonstrates that these groups are more similar to political organizations than to the transnational communities. The deep distrust of people from one community for another makes for difficulties in forming and maintaining pan-Mixtec organizations. Nevertheless, the existence of these organizations indicates a desire to keep ethnic identity and cooperation alive among Mixtecs, including the second generation. The more enduring ties of the transnational communities will probably determine whether or not an ethnic tradition develops beyond the first generation, however. The fact that most migrants settle with members of their own villages makes this possibility more realistic than one might expect.

THE IJA: AN ALTERNATIVE TO ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS?

The Mixtec wing of the IJA contrasts with the ethnic organizations. It cannot claim the membership of these larger groups; however, the growth of the church is closely linked to the development of the transnational communities. Most congregations are made up of participants from only one or two of these. This recapitulates the process of migration in general. While there are conflicts within congregations of the IJA, there are mechanisms for dealing with these without endangering the organization as a whole. The process of creating new congregations is, in part, a way to downplay conflicts as well as convert newcomers. The fact that church members mainly proselytize their fellow villagers helps continue the process of growth along village lines.

Members of the IJA generally do not participate in FIOB or other ethnically based organizations. They know about these groups and their activities, but they stay away from them. They do not see themselves as in conflict with them; rather, the IJA solves for its members many of the problems addressed by the Centro and MICOP, among other organizations. The IJA, like most Evangelical churches, does not get involved in politics. Its position is that it is best to obey and support existing political authorities, because the time will soon be here when Jesus returns and replaces all political entities. Thus, the IJA will never become the kind of political organization that might bring together people of different villages into one solidary group. The closest they come to this are the frequent confraternidades, where people from one congregation invite those from surrounding communities to share in several days of prayer, testimonials, sermons, and large amounts of food. Visitors are urged to accept Jesus as their savior, and many convert in the emotionally charged atmosphere. In my view, these occasions are similar to the fiestas of the Mixteca region: certain groups gain prestige within the church by hosting successful confraternidades. But there is no way that the confraternidades will ever evolve into a pan-Mixtec organization.

MIXTEC DIASPORA?

To return to the matter first broached at the beginning of this chapter: Do the Mixtecs constitute a diaspora? The short answer is no, because they have not been migrating long enough to produce a large second generation. But the possibilities for the development of a diaspora are there. They include the dispersal of members of a group with a specific homeland that they revere and hope to return to. There is also the emergence of elites who identify with the group's ethnicity and are striving to maintain it. There is some anecdotal evidence in the second generation, as it comes of age, that its members wish to remain Mixtecs rather than casting off this despised identity. Part of the reason for this may be the persistence of poverty among the Mixtec populations both in Mexico and the United States. Segmented assimilation, along with downward mobility and the failure to join the majority culture in both countries, implies a somewhat more negative take on the situation. But whether the Mixtecs become a true diaspora remains the domain of generations as yet unborn.

NOTES

1. I use the term *diaspora* to describe Mexicans in the United States because I believe the term applies to this population.

2. Jornaleros Agrícolas interviews, February and March 2005.

3. Jornaleros Agrícolas interviews.

4. INEGI 1970, 1990, 2000, 2010.

5. This word symbolically unites the land of clouds (ñuu vicu), that is, the region of Mixtepec, with the word for plain. This means that they are on a plain (Sonora is mostly flat), but they are still the people of the clouds.

6. Jornaleros Agrícolas interviews

7. Information on the Mount Vernon area comes from an email in 2012 from Emily John-Martin, an employee of the Washington State Education Department.

8. For a more complete discussion of indigenous migrant organizations, see Velasco Ortiz 2005.

8

Concluding Remarks

MIXTECS IN THE MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM

The casual visitor to a present-day Mixtec village might be forgiven for thinking its residents are far removed from the modern world. But Mixtecs have been part of the world-system since they were colonized by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. Their relationship with the world today is still one of neocolonial dependency, although the Spanish empire is long gone. Mixtecs began migrating for work in the nineteenth century because the world market for cochineal—a product they exported for profit—collapsed. World market forces have been at the bottom of their migrations ever since. Today, in the Mixteca region, corn imported from the United States is cheaper than the corn Mixtecs produce; they are forced to sell for less. Many must emigrate in order to survive. In northern Mexico, they invariably work on farms that produce food for US tables. They are found in at least half of the states of the United States, arguably the most global, modern nation in the world. But their status in the United States is that of a minority within a minority, at the bottom of the social and economic ladder. This situation has more to do with multinational corporations, international agencies, and multilateral banks than with Mixtecs' abilities, goals, and aspirations.

The response to this onslaught of globalization has been to form transnational communities that maintain the village as the core of the social structure. Networks spread over the territory between the village and the wide expanse of land on both sides of the border. The members of the community, wherever they may be, are connected to the village by cell phones. As long as the members of the community

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continue to give service—to participate in village activities, even from far away—they maintain their rights as villagers.

TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Transnational communities are responses to impersonal global forces beyond the control of individuals or even villages. Religious conversion, on the other hand, is a personal decision made by individuals. As Bernice Martin (1998:128), in her discussion of Latin American Pentecostals, points out,

> As individuals, especially if they are near the bottom of the social pile, they cannot alter the macro-structures within which they have to contrive their own survival. But they can alter their responses to these limiting conditions. In converting to Pentecostalism they empower themselves in ways which have concrete consequences for themselves and for society.

Religious change has created major upheavals in Mixtec culture. First, the non-Catholics, upon returning to the villages, began to proselytize, saying the saints had no power. Then they refused to participate in the Catholic parts of usos y costumbres. They began to make converts. They threatened to destroy the cultural traditions based in part on the celebrations of saints in the Catholic Church. The fiestas were at the heart of Mixtec village life. In fact, many migrants specifically worked to earn money to sponsor the fiestas, in order to maintain their traditions. The disruptions caused by Evangelicals led at first to some being expelled from their villages. Many remained in the migrant stream in order to avoid ostracism from their fellow villagers. Despite these disruptions, all the members of the villages, or at least those who choose to participate in village life, have supported the maintenance of the community structure. Even the members of Colonia Sinaí, who were expelled from their village, continue to honor Mixtec traditions such as tequio and continue considering themselves members of the village.

The ways that Mixtec converts behave within the transnational communities, and the responses of those communities, differ according to the impacts of globalization and migration on each village. Some examples of the variety of responses by different villages to the influx of return migrants and Evangelical members are found in chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this book. These examples by no means exhaust the possibilities. Surely each village has its own pattern of resistance to and acceptance of change.

MIXTEC VILLAGES AS TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

Their allegiance to the villages is what makes Mixtecs different from most Mexican migrants. It is also what has led to the creation of transnational communities. They

are transnational today because most Mixtec migrants live in the United States. But the strength of village community networks has characterized them since they first began to migrate. Those early migrants to Veracruz and Mexico City returned to their communities for the fiestas and continued to give service in order to maintain their membership in the villages. The same is true of the migrants to northwest Mexico. Today, the pull of the village remains strong among Mixtec migrants. Instead of allowing themselves to be swallowed up in the impersonal maw of this new great transformation, they remain members of their tiny communities thousands of miles away.

TRANSNATIONAL STUDIES, GLOBALIZATION, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Transnational communities became, beginning in the 1990s, the subject of numerous studies. Research on transnational processes, which actually began with the analysis by Michael Kearney and Carole Nagengast of Mixtec farmworkers, has had a trajectory not uncommon to social science topics (Kearney and Nagengast 1989). First, a flurry of activity and publications (see Levitt and Jaworsky 2007), followed by heavy criticism (e.g., Glick Schiller 2005; Faist 2010) and a subsequent decline in studies. To be sure, Kearney and Nagengast correctly described Mixtecs as having transnational communities, and no doubt there are others elsewhere in the world. However, as Ghassan Hage (2005:467–68) points out, the term has been used to describe groups who do not really constitute communities. Rather, these are said to be "imagined communities," much like those of purported diaspora populations. At this point, the term *transnational* is like the term *diaspora*: so broad as to be almost meaningless (Glick Schiller 2005:442–43). Yet like diaspora, transnational can be useful if carefully defined.

According to Thomas Faist (2000:207): "Transnational communities characterize situations in which international movers and stayers are connected by dense and strong social and symbolic ties over time and across space to patterns of networks and circuits in two countries." This is a fairly accurate description of Mixtec transnational communities. Their transnational networks are based on dense, strong social and symbolic ties, which have developed over time and across space. The networks connect movers and stayers in two countries, Mexico and the United States. Like most studies of transnational phenomena, this is exactly a description. It does not explain.

More recently, Faist (2010:1669) has called for the application of world-system theory to this process: "[T]ransnational flows in the context of migration strongly coincide with the economic and derivative political power asymmetries

of the world economy. Dense and continuous transnational flows build upon migration systems which in turn are structured by core-periphery relations." This is more explanatory: economic and political power asymmetries between core and periphery are the reasons why transnational communities develop in the first place. Mixtecs had no choice but to migrate, and their response to the effects of migration is the transnational community. Taken together, these two quotes from Faist describe and explain the processes Mixtecs have gone through over the past century.

In creating transnational communities, Mixtecs have had to change the focus of their identities to some extent. The traditional focus was always and exclusively the village. The idea of a Mixtec "nation" was absent (Miguel Bartolomé, personal communication, 2012). Now, in the migrant streams, Mixtecs from different villages recognize each other. They still importantly identify with their villages, but another level of abstraction has been added. To this, the concept of indigenous peoples brings yet another level of abstraction, wherein Mixtecs recognize the similarities, for example, between themselves and Zapotecs to the exclusion of non-indigenous people. This consciousness of indigeneity has, in turn, resulted in the formation of indigenous organizations such as FIOB. This group, while still a majority of Mixtecs, also includes non-Mixtec Oaxacan indigenous people. The idea that a member of a Mixtec village could feel solidarity with a Zapotec or a Triqui is recent, and is a direct consequence of transnational migration.

SELECTIVE MODERNITY

The use of cell phones and the installation of sewage systems may be indications of modernity, but modernity is more than plumbing. As discussed in chapter 2, modernity is the major underlying paradigm for Europe and the United States, and its adoption by people who are not in these places is the main goal of such projects as economic development and missionary activity, among others. Modernity includes individual freedom of choice over the rule of the community, democratic institutions, religious freedom, and, importantly, progress in all its manifestations. To what extent are these conditions found in the Mixtec transnational communities discussed in this book? As I have pointed out, this varies from one community to another. However, in general there is no freedom of choice over the rule of the community. In order to maintain their membership in the villages, individuals must comply with the requirements of the community. Democracy exists but in a limited way: in most villages, women do not participate in the political process; they cannot vote in the annual elections of leaders. However, the process of migration has affected this also. In some villages, there

are not enough men in each family resident in the village, so the women must represent the families. Whether or not this is true modernity remains to be seen, however. It is likely that men will maintain their power for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, women do not have equal power with men in the United States, either. But at least they can vote.

Religious freedom is what the non-Catholics want, while the Catholics want to remain under the control of the Catholic Church. Here is the crux of the matter: Are non-Catholics more modern than Catholics? Certainly there is more freedom of individual choice in the non-Catholic churches: the individual is responsible for his/her own salvation and each person must decide as an individual to be baptized. However, this individual freedom is limited to religion. It does not translate to an overall embrace of modernity. Meanwhile, institutionalized rules of impersonal bureaucracies, other elements of modernity, are precisely the means by which the modern world imprisons Mixtecs at the bottom of the social hierarchies in each country where they live. Their role in the bureaucracy is as cogs in a wheel rather than as individual participants.

In all the villages in this study, the basic pattern of village organization remains decidedly nonmodern. A sewage system may be paid for by money earned as dependent migrant labor, but the community builds the sewer system with its own labor. Perhaps the term "selective modernity" can be used to describe this combination of modern and traditional behaviors. In this process, some elements of traditional culture are decoupled from others. At the same time, some aspects of modernity are integrated into the mix. Mixtecs do not want to swallow the modernity package whole. They merely want to accept those modern elements that suit them, that allow for the continuation of what is at bottom a traditional system. They do not reject all of modernity, however. They are merely selective in their adaptation to their situation in the modern world. They consciously decide what modern behaviors to accept and what to reject.

Unlike some other indigenous groups (e.g., Dow 2001), Mixtecs are not trying to eliminate the traditional social system by becoming non-Catholics. Certainly the religious aspects of the cargo system are slowly being reduced in size and scope, but this is the work of Catholics as well as converts. Both groups agree that the cultural weaving of the traditional village is no longer in existence once there are non-Catholics there. But the essential elements of village life remain: the community controls the natural resources, which cannot be sold to anyone outside the community. The villages are run by members elected by the general assembly. Corvée labor and service to the community are required for village membership. These traditions are recognized and honored by state and federal governments.

TOWARD A GENERAL EXPLANATION OF RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

In the Mixtec case, there is a clear causal relationship between globalization, migration, and religious change. While this is the case with many other communities as well (e.g., Jaimes Martínez 2009; O'Connor 2009; Robledo Hernández 2009; Camargo Martínez 2004), it is by no means universal. For example, Garma Navarro (1987) describes the importance of missionaries in the conversion of Totonacas in Puebla. Andrade's (1999) discussion of religious conversion in Ecuador identifies the effects of land reform and other economic displacements as the contexts for religious conversion. In his study of conversion in the Sierra Juárez in Oaxaca, Gross (2001:204–29) did not find that migration significantly influenced conversion. But he points out that even in this fairly circumscribed area, the patterns of conversion, conflict, and conflict resolution vary considerably from one community to another. Today, there is an increasing number of studies on Evangelicals in Latin America (e.g., Rivera Farfán and Juárez Cerdi 2007; Rangel Lozano 2011; Rodríguez López 2011). Apparently, we are on the way to developing a general understanding of these phenomena. The present work aspires to contribute to this general understanding.

Glossary

agencia: The smallest political entity, usually a village.

agente: Leader of an agencia; one of the autoridades.

autoridades: The political leaders selected during the annual assembly in each village.

ayuntamiento: The building where the offices of the autoridades are found.

cargo: A duty taken on by participants in the system of usos y costumbres; part of the civil/religious hierarchy.

confraternidad: A gathering of large groups of non-Catholics from different congregations over a period of several days.

distrito: A political entity between the state and the municipio. In Mexico, distritos are found only in Oaxaca.

Evangélicos: Evangelicals

expulsados: Expelled ones. This term refers to non-Catholics who have been expelled from their communities for being non-Catholic.

fiesta: The combination of folk-Catholic and political events that are the high point of Mixtec village life; part of the system of usos y costumbres.

hermano, hermana: Brother, sister; also, what Evangelicals call each other.

localidad: A census category; it includes places with one residence as well as cities.

mayordomo: The highest post on the religious side of the civil/religious hierarchy; sponsor of the fiesta.

municipio: A political entity between the distrito and the agencia.

Ñuu Shaavi: Land of rain; the name Mixtecs give to their homeland.

Ñuu Vicu: Land of clouds; the name Mixtepecos give to their village.

pipa: A tanker truck that carries water to places not hooked up to any water agency or well.

presidente municipal: Political leader of a municipio, a political level above an agencia.

remittances: Money sent by migrants to their home communities. Remittances may also be goods and/or cultural knowledge brought back to the home communities.

servicio: Literally, service. *Dar servicio* (to give service) refers to the requirement that each family in a community contribute labor and goods for free to the community in order to maintain membership.

socios: Members of the families of the fiesta sponsors who contribute money, goods, and labor to the fiesta.

tequio: Corvée labor, provided by members of each community. Every family must contribute one family member for one day each week.

usos y costumbres: The name given to the system of the civil/religious hierarchy; the traditional government of Mixtec villages.

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